

HTTYD The Kunoichi's Way

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Summary: Genderbent Hiccup and Astrid. After her battle with the red death Hicca exploring takes her to Japan where she encounters a ninja clan that takes her in. Spending the next six years in training she becomes and powerfully skilled ninja and returns home in Berk's hour of need. Using her new skills she shows them she as tough as any viking. Disclaimer: Do not own HTTYD

1. Chapter 1

****To Japan****

Hicca was atop her faithful companion as they flew through the dark gray clouds while battling the Red Death. The mountain sized dragon was threatening the lives of her people and Hicca knew she and Toothless were the only ones who could stop it. Knowing that its size gave it a tremendous advantage, Hicca came to the conclusion that stealth and aiming at the dragon's only weak point, its ragged looking wings, was the only way to win. As they flew through the clouds and fired more and more holes into the wings in hope to bring it down the pair heard the monster roar in anger.

Growing frustrated at the elusive enemy the giant dragon let loose a torrent of fire in all direction in hopes of killing its prey.

Seeing the advancing wave of fire coming toward them Hicca shouted to Toothless, "Watch out!" With an adjustment of the tailfin Hicca made Toothless dive and he ducked below the flames just in time to let them rolled.

Sighing in relief Hicca knew that they needed to end this battle. "Alright hun' that was too close. Let's end this," she said determined.

Toothless growled in agreement.

With an adjustment of the tailfin Toothless turned around and flew toward the giant dragon and roared in challenge. "Come on! That all you got!" Hicca yelled as fiercely as she could.

The dragon saw them and tried to crush them in its jaws. But the small dragon did a loop in the air, just avoiding death. Then it went into a dive and the giant dragon went after them determined to finish them off.

"Alright hunny, we got this. Just hang in there," Hiccup said to reassure his partner.

Down and down they dived as Hicca awaited the right moment to strike. Finally she heard the giant take a breath as it was preparing to loose its fire on them. "NOW HUN'!" Hicca shouted to Toothless.

At his rider's command, Toothless flipped over so that he was diving with his back toward the ground. Then he unleashed his last bolt of fire into the giant dragon's mouth igniting the gas at the back of its throat. Facing forward once again he saw the ground coming up toward them as they cleared the cover of the clouds. Opening his wings they caught the air and lifted him up and passed the giant dragon.

Seeing the ground the giant dragon opened its wings to stop its fall, but the holes shot in its wings gave as the air rushed past them. With giant holes in its wings the giant dragon could only roar as it helplessly rushed toward the ground.

Finally impacting, the giant's body ignited as its own fire burned it from the inside out.

On Toothless Hicca could feel the heat of the fireball as she and Toothless raced between the dragon's massive spikes as they attempted to get clear.

* * *

><p>Watching the climactic battle from the ground, Stoick the Vast held his breath as he saw his daughter on the Night Fury dive toward the ground with the monster close behind. He wondered what Hicca's plan to defeat the beast was. His eyes widened in surprise as he saw a blue flash come from the Night Fury and fly into the gaping mouth of the bigger dragon. Within seconds the giant dragon's mouth was filled with fire. Then in relief he saw the Fury open its wings pull up past the monster. He saw the monster attempt to do the same thing and noticed that giant holes were tearing in its wings.<p>

"That must have been Hicca's plan," said Ash Hofferson at the chief's side.

He nodded in agreement and smiled at his daughter's ingenuity. He would make up for all the years he had been a bad father. That he swore to himself. He couldn't believe how blind he had been at his little girl's remarkableness.

He quickly covered his face as the giant collided with the ground and its body went up in a huge fireball that made dirt and rock fly everywhere. He prayed to whatever gods were listening that his

daughter and her fury would be ok.

* * *

><p>Almost home free, the last obstacle they had to clear was the dragon's tail. Coming up on it quickly Hicca adjusted the prosthetic and Toothless did a wide barrel roll, missing the tail by a few feet but clearing it without a scratch. With nothing in front of them anymore Toothless pumped his wings harder and soon they were back in the clouds as they outflew the blast.<p>

Stopping to hover in the air Hicca released a breath she didn't know she was holding in relief at having survived. Below she saw the island covered in ash and smoke from the explosion of the dragon. She spied her people through the veil of smoke and smiled as they saw they were ok.

"HICCA! HICCA! Where are you dear?!" She heard her father shout from below frantically. She could make out the form of her father looking around trying to find her.

She saw the other Vikings joining her father in his search as they scanned the beach and the skies. She realized that they probably couldn't see Toothless in clouds from this distance.

Toothless crooned at Hicca, waiting for her to tell him what they should do.

Hicca took a moment to think about everything. Should she return to them? Her tribe had always treated her as an outcast. A burden. Only now did they seem to care about her well-being. She didn't want to return to being the oddity and embarrassment of her tribe. Even if she was a hero now, she was still weak, still scrawny, still the most un-Viking like being in existence. With heavy heart she came to a decision. She was glad she could make her father proud, she was glad she could save her tribe, she was glad she could show them that they were wrong about dragons, but Hicca was going to leave.

With her heart clenching she patted Toothless on the head and leaned down to whisper to him. "Let's go hun'."

Looking back to see if his partner was sure, the dragon obliged when the Viking nodded in confirmation. Staying in the clouds he soared away from the island at a moderate speed.

Hicca blinked back tears as her father's shouts for her faded into the distance as they left and soared to an unknown destination. "It's just gonna be you and me for a while hun'."

Goodbye daddy. Be safe and be happy.

* * *

><p>For the next few months Hicca explored the archipelago. She stopped on islands to hunt, find water, and sleep. At islands she knew to have friendly tribes but wouldn't know who she was she hid Toothless before walking to the village seeking some work. Using her smithing skills she earned enough gold to buy the materials she needed to construct saddled bags and buy camping gear. With her new supplies she and Toothless set out again. Exploring further and

further they eventually left the territory of Vikings and flew to other lands.

_She made sure to stay out of site and away from people and they continued to fly. She noticed that these lands they flew through didn't seem to have dragons. They flew over endless forests, vast plains, miles of sand, and mountain ranges before flying over a last stretch of water and toward a large land mass that seemed to consist of a vast collections of islands and a main land. _

_With excitement she and Toothless hurried to explore this new unknown land. _

_What she didn't know was that her visit to this land would forever change her life. This was the land of magic and myth. In it were fierce warrior who used stealth and shadow to strike fear into their enemies. This was the land of the rising sun. This was the land of the shinobi. _

This was Japan.

* * *

><p>Landing in a forest near a river, Hicca descended Toothless and stretched her stiff muscles. Riding Toothless for long periods of time was a strenuous process and she was glad they had found this landmass.<p>

"What do you think hun'? A nice place to explore?" Hicca asked her companion.

Toothless paused from drinking in the river to look up and nod.

Hicca smiled and stooped to scoop up some water. Drinking her fill, she stood and waited for her companion. When he finished he looked up to him and gave him a gummy grin. Hicca smiled back and turned to walk to the edge of the forest with her companion close behind. She stopped at the forest edge to see what she could observe. The forest was full of thick foliage and had a plethora of unknown plants and surely animals. She turned to see what Toothless thought they should do when she paused in notice of her companion's expression. Toothless's eyes were in slits as he sniffed the air curiously. Then with his tongue lolling out of his mouth he dashed into the forest. Hicca sighed at her friend's strange reaction. Normally she'd be tearing off after him, but she was still sore from the flight and decided against it.

"Just stay away from people," she called out after him. Returning to the river's edge, she sat on a rock and threw stones into river. She continued to do this out of boredom for the next few minutes as she waited for Toothless to return.

Suddenly up the river a loud beating noise was heard. Turning her head she saw two people approaching on horses. With wide eyes she quickly stood up and contemplated running into the forest. The chance that they would follow her and harm Toothless made her decide against it. She stood nervously as the men stopped a few feet away from her and dismounted. With unfriendly faces they looked her up and down before one of them in red armor started to approach. She stood her

ground and tried to remain calm. Maybe they would let her go on her way. Maybe they were friendly. When the man reached her he looked down at her and spoke something that sounded like a demand.

Hicca furrowed her eyebrows at the man's words. She couldn't make heads or tails of them. "Umâ€¦sorry, but I don't understand you," she said nervously. She tried chuckling and shrugging lightly to break the tension. The man was not amused. Once again he demanded something in a harsher tone. Growing panicked Hicca decided to try and get away, "Well we're getting nowhere. So I'm just gonnaâ€¦go," she said quietly while attempting to inch away from the man.

The man suddenly grabbed her and pushed her down. Now sitting against the rock she had been previously sitting on, Hicca looked up and her face paled as the man drew the sword at his hip. He then held the sword a few inches from her face.

"Please I'm not a threat. I just wanna go. I didn't mean to trespass," Hicca said desperately. Though she was fully aware that they didn't speak the same language, Hicca was too scared to stop talking.

The man seemed to grow more annoyed with her and pressed the blade against her neck. She winced as he pressed the blade into her skin causing a slight drop of blood to appear. Hicca decided to make one last attempt, "Please. I'll leave and I'll never come back," she begged with her hands clasped together.

The man kept a blank face before lifting the sword over his head. Hicca realized the man was going to kill her. Tears started to form in her eyes as she began to hyperventilate. She didn't want to die like this. She was still so young and had just started to live her life. As the man adjusted his grip on his sword Hicca shut her eyes tight and mentally said goodbye to her father. She would miss him and she hoped he was ok.

As she waited for the man to slash her with his sword she peeked open an eye nervously. To her surprise the man wasn't moving at all. His face remained the same and his sword remained over his head, but otherwise he was perfectly frozen. Then, slowly the man started to lean to the right before he just fell over. The other man called out to his companion before whirling around to face the forest and drawing his sword.

Looking at the man, Hicca's eyes widened as she realized what happened. The man had been murdered. There was a dart sticking out of the back of his neck. She suddenly felt like throwing up and thanking the gods at the same time. Looking at the other man, noticed that the horses had run off. The man kept shouting to the forest and raising his weapons up in a threatening manner. Hicca could only wonder what was lurking in the forest.

Suddenly from out of nowhere a person stepped out of the forest line. It was a person wearing all black and they had their mouth and nose covered up by a black mask. On the person's back was one of those swords the men in the armor had. The man held his sword at the ready as he shouted at the person in black. The person in black didn't seem to think much of the armed man though as they didn't draw their weapon. They just let their arms hang at their side. Then with a shout the man swung his sword horizontally at the person in black's

head. Hicca was sure that the person would be beheaded. Amazingly the person just ducked under the slash before reaching an arm behind them and swinging their arm across the person's neck level. Hiccup saw a flash of metal and assumed the person had grabbed a weapon. The man in the armor didn't move for a moment. Then suddenly he dropped his sword. It clanged to the ground loudly before the man dropped to his knees and brought his hands up to his throat.

Hicca squinted her eyes and noticed that the man's hands were turning red as blood was seeping through the cracks in his fingers. The person in black had slit the man's throat with one swipe. Slowly the person put away the weapon before drawing the sword on their back. Steeping to the man side the person raised the sword above their head. Shutting her eyes, Hicca didn't want to see what was coming next. When a thud hit the ground, Hicca knew it was over. Opening her eyes, she saw the man head on the ground and almost threw up. The person in black put their sword away and glanced over at her.

Hicca remained frozen on the spot. She didn't know what to do. Would this person kill her for witnessing two murders? She tried to make herself seem as uninteresting as possible in hopes that the person would see her as no consequence. Then from the tree line emerged another figure in black. He surveyed the scene and spoke to the other person. Hearing their voices, Hicca now believed that the one who killed the men was a woman. While the newer person sounded like a young man. They spoke back and forth before the young man turned his gaze in Hicca's direction and pointed at her.

He spoke something that sounded dark and Hicca tensed. The girl just shook her head and pointed with her thumb to the forest. It seemed like the young man wanted to do something about her while the woman just thought they should leave. The young man seemed insistent on something as he continued to look at Hicca and speak. The other girl just shook her head and indicated with her head to follow as she began to make her way to the forest. The young man just continued to stare at her with a cold glare. Hicca just wished that they would leave. The woman spoke sharply to the man, having stopped at the edge of the forest and turned around, trying to get him to follow. The young man shook his head vigorously and said something before reaching behind him and then hurling something at Hicca.

Hicca noticed the flash of metal and barely had time to move her head to avoid the projectile. The projectile bounced flew right past her head but not before scratching her cheek. She felt blood leak from the wound and brought her hand up to wipe it away. She was growing panicked as the man reached behind him and pulled out a knife. Hicca's blood ran cold as she realized the man wanted to kill her. The woman shouted at the man in an attempt to make him stop. As she was about to step forward to grab him the young man charged with his weapon at the ready.

Taking a deep breath, Hicca shouted for her companion, "TOOTHLESS!" She screamed with all her might and prayed that he was close enough to reach her in time.

The man had paused for a moment at her shouting. Then he surged forward again with the intent to kill her. Before he came within striking range a noise could be heard coming from the forest. In a blur a dark mass leapt over the woman and man and landed in front of Hicca. She released a breath in relief at her companion's excellent

timing. Facing the man, Toothless let out his most fearsome roar, bolstered by his desire to defend Hicca.

The man reeled back and released a shout of terror at the sight of the black dragon. With wide eyes, he and the woman stared at Toothless with mixed looks of wonder, fear, and what looked like praise. Toothless growled at them and bared his fangs. Backing up he curled his body around Hicca defensively and nudged her face.

"I'm ok hun'. You saved me," she said to reassure him.

"Kage no Ryu," Hicca heard the woman say.

Turning to face the woman and man, she saw that their weapons were put away. Still staring at Toothless they bowed to him in respect. Then they began to speak animatedly back and forth. They kept repeating 'Kage no Ryu' which seemed to indicate Toothless. Hicca contemplated sneaking away when suddenly her vision began to swim. The world seemed to be spinning and she had no clue as to why. Then she realized that the projectile that scratched her must had poison on it like the dart. She tried to say something to Toothless but the world quickly faded to black as she suddenly keeled over on her side. The last thing she heard was Toothless's concerned screech before succumbing to darkness and silence.

* * *

><p>Hey guys. Hope this story catches your interest so far. Keep reading and i hope you will like what i come up with

2. Chapter 2

****Becoming a Kunoichi****

What must have been hours later, Hicca's mind began to come around from the blackness that it had been in. Slowly her body started to regain its functions and her mind started to clear. Opening her eyes felt like the most difficult physical task in the world. As she tried, her other senses started taking in information. She felt like she was wrapped in something warm. It was eerily silent wherever she was and she assumed that meant she was no longer outside. Finally opening her eyes, she noticed a faint light in the room. Then suddenly a large black mass floated into her field of vision. Startled for a second, she relaxed when she recognized the mass as her companion and friend.

With a small smile she weakly said, "Hey hun' "

Toothless crooned in concern and began to lick her profusely. That finally spurred her body into movement. With yelps of protest she got Toothless to stop licking her and shoved his head away. Wiping her face with her sleeve she raised herself up to a seating position. Looking left and right and to the ceiling she took in the room. The ceiling looked like a cave ceiling. All around her there were white walls with black trimmings. They looked to be made of papers and she couldn't spy a door. Beneath her, the floor seemed to be made of a green material.

"You are awake," came a voice behind her.

With a gasp, Hicca twisted her body so she could look behind her. There she saw a man sitting cross legged on the floor with a low table to his right. The man was definitely advanced in age as there were wrinkles on his face. He had stubble on his face and short black hair. His eyes were peculiar. They were oddly shaped. She realized that the other people she saw also had similar eyes and assumed that it must have been a common trait among these people. The man was wearing some kind of strange looking black robes and he had a cup in his hand.

Nervously she asked, "What happened?"

"You were poisoned by one of Daigo's shuriken. Mayumi managed to give you the antidote in time and she brought you back here," he answered matter of factly.

"Where am I?" she asked, pressing for details.

"You are in our hideout. Do not worry you are safe," he answered calmly.

Swallowing nervously she asked her next question, "Am I a prisoner?"

"No. You are a guest. You may leave anytime you wish," he said before taking a drink from his cup.

She breathed a sigh of relief. At least she wasn't being held captive. That didn't mean she was safe though. One of their people had tried to kill her, and she had seen one of them kill two people. Looking to Toothless, she was surprised to see he was relaxed. He showed no signs that he mistrusted this stranger and Toothless had very good instincts.

"Now that I've answered your questions, will you answer mine?" the man said, causing her to turn around and face him. With a hesitant nod she gave him the go ahead.

"What is a Norseman child doing in these lands?"

She took a breath at the realization that he knew her origins. Her eyes then widened as she finally noticed that he had been speaking her language the entire time. Overcoming her shock she answered, "I'm just traveling with my companion," she said while indicating Toothless. "We stopped in these lands to exploreâ€|How come you can speak my language?" she asked curiously.

"I have learned a lot of things in my life. One particular interest of mine has been languages. Looking through your things I found runes indicating that you are of Viking origins," he explained.

She nodded in understanding and remained silent, unsure of how to proceed. Then the man stood up. Looking down at her he stepped forward and offered her a hand. Taking it, he pulled her to her feet gently. "Follow me. I would like to show you around," with that he walked to the front of the room and reached toward the wall. Then he grabbed onto the edge of on the wall and jerked his arm to the left revealing a sliding door. Looking back expectantly he motioned for

her to follow.

With a moment of hesitation she slowly stepped forward and after the man with Toothless right behind her. Her natural curiosity getting the better of her, she wanted to know more about this land. On the other side of the door was a long cave that was illuminated by lanterns hanging from the ceiling. She assumed that this structured was carved into the mountain. She proceeded to follow the man as he walked ahead of her through the tunnel. As they went deeper they took twist and turns and passed by other doors that probably led to the quarters of the other residents here. After ten minutes of walking the man led her to a large door. Sliding it open she was surprised by the size of the room on the other side.

The room was full of people dressed in black. They were all over the room and they were divided into groups. Some were sparring in rectangular sections of the cave floor. Other were throwing projectiles at wooden targets lined against the walls. More were taking practice swings with weapons ranging to swords, daggers, spears, and other weapons she hadn't seen before. The people in the room ranged from ages of a few years younger than her to at least their thirties.

Finding her voice she asked, "What is this place?"

"This is the base of our ninja clan," the man said simply.

"Ninja? What are ninja?" Hicca asked completely clueless.

"Ninja are warriors of stealth and shadow. We use our skills for assassination, espionage, and sabotage," the man answered.

"And those men from earlier today?"

"Those were corrupt samurai who had been using their status to commit crimes in the various villages in this province. Our clan was asked by the people to take them out."

"And why am I here?" she asked quietly while turning to look up at the man.

"Ah yes, I should explain," he paused to turn to face her before continuing. "We are the clan of the Kage no Ryu, the Shadow Dragon," he said while looking to Toothless. "I believe, young lady that you coming here and encountering the clan is an omen. A sign of the clan's return to power. You see, the clan has suffered a blow we are still recovering from and we have lost much influence."

"I think you're mistaken sir. It was just coincidence that I witnessed that murder. An accident really," she stammered out.

"There are no accidents in this world young miss. That is something I learned a long time ago," he answered calmly.

"Yeah but I don't know what you think I can do to help. I'm not a warrior," she said pressing her argument.

"Not yet," the man said with a smile. "I am offering you chance to join the clan. To train with us, to be a ninja, a Kunoichi," he added

firmly.

Hicca cast her gaze down in shame, "But I'm not strong. I mess things up. I can't kill people," she muttered quietly. She didn't want to disappoint these people. She was tired of being a disappointment to everyone. Suddenly she looked up when she felt a hand on her shoulder. She was met with the kind eyes of the older man.

"Do not doubt yourself young lady. I sense great potential in you. And besides," he paused to indicate to the people training. "We are ninja. Our style doesn't emphasize brute force. We use precision, speed, and our keen knowledge of the human body to destroy our opponents. You can learn these too in time," he said reassuringly.

Still unsure she fiddled with the end of her tunic. "But I don't know if I could kill someone," she added quietly.

"As I said before, we also serve as spies and saboteurs, you don't necessarily have to kill anyone," he reiterated.

A small flame of excitement bloomed within Hicca. Something about becoming strong really spoke to her. She had always been weak by the standards of her people. But looking around she noticed that she wasn't really all that tiny here. These people weren't huge like her father and the rest of her tribe. What if she could do this? What if she could become strong in her own way? With a last bit of deliberation she turned to her companion. Toothless gave her a smile and a nod in support. He would do whatever she wished.

With passion in her soul she turned to the man to give him her answer, "Ok. I want to give it a shot."

With a nod he smiled to her. Then his face became stern, "Be warned though young lady. This is rigorous training. You will feel like your bones are breaking. We will push your body to its limits. But if you can endure it, you will become truly strong," he said in mild warning.

Steeling herself she held her head high and gave a firm nod. She would become strong in her own way. She would prove to those that called her weak that they were wrong. She would prove it to herself that she could be strong. "I'm Hicca," she said holding out her hand.

With a smile the man reached out to shake her hand, "You may call me sensei Shou."

Hicca nodded. She listened intently as sensei Shou explained to her how she would be taught. She was nervous. But mostly she was excited. She had overcome so much and faced so many challenges. There was a fire in her that made her want to overcome this challenge too. And she swore to herself that she would.

* * *

><p>Months after the defeat of the Red Death, the whole island of Berk had completely changed. The people started to live with the dragons. They were becoming a part of their lives. They walked through their streets, perched on their houses, and even sat side by

side with the villagers in their homes. All the new changes to Berk were overseen and put into action by none other than Stoick the Vast.<p>

The big man was diligent in changing their tribe's way of killing dragons. Now a dragon wouldn't be killed in less it was absolutely necessary. He also oversaw grievances and helped settle disputed between the dragons and his people as a good chief should. To everyone who didn't know the large man well, you'd swear that he was completely fine and focused on his chiefly duties. And apart of him was. Keeping the peace between two factions that had been enemies for centuries was an arduous task. But nowadays, there was an air of sadness hanging over the big man. The cause was clear to everyone. It was the disappearance of his daughter, his heir, his only child, and the last remnant of his loving wife.

Many had just assumed that Hicca had died in the explosion of the Red Death. But Stoick couldn't accept that. Something in him said that Hicca was alive. Apart of him also thought that maybe it was denial; that he simply couldn't come to terms with her death. He felt a heavy guilt within his heart at the way he treated his daughter all those years. With her gone, he would never be able to make it up to her. Many of the reasons he brought the dragons into the village was as a way to honor her. And should she ever return, show her that he was a changed man.

Shaking himself from his thoughts he resumed his duties as chief. He had to keep the village going, so that if Hicca were to ever return, she would have a home to come back to.

Inside the former kill ring, Ash Hofferson was feeling the same guilt and sorrow that his chief was feeling. Sitting atop a barrel as he waited for the other teens to join him, his thoughts were all about Hicca. He felt shame at the way he treated her all those years. He had never so much as said a kind word to her. He avoided her like the plague and treated her as a nuisance. Now, he would never be able to apologize or make amends.

Additionally his heart was broken at having lost the amazing girl. In the short time he had begun to know the girl and truly see her for who she was, she had stolen his heart. Romantic affection for the girl had begun to bloom within him, and now he would never be able to explore what it could have turned into. He would never be able to tell her how he felt about her. A nudge from behind brought him out of his sad brooding. With a smile he turned around to rub the nose of his Deadly Nadder, Stormfly. The concerned dragon was sensing her rider's sadness and was trying to cheer him up.

"I'm ok girl," he said to reassure his dragon. He appreciated having her around. She would often pull him out of his self-wallowing. But she also reminded him of something he could never thank Hicca for.

"Give it up Fishlegs," came the voice of Snotlout from the academy's entrance. Looking toward the entrance, Ash was met with the sight of the other academy members entering. Snotlout was in the lead followed by the twins and then Fishlegs.

"I'm just saying guys, I think it highly possible," Fishlegs insisted.

"What's possible?" Ash asked slightly curious.

"Fishlegs thinks Hicca is alive," Tuffnut said rolling his eyes.

"Yeah, if she was alive, why wouldn't she come back here?" Ruffnut said crossing her arms and waiting for Fishlegs to retort.

"Come on guys. Don't you think it's weird that we never found a body? If not Hicca's then at least her Night Fury's. I mean, dragons are fireproof. Its body should have at least survived the explosion," he explained.

Ash had considered that as well. Some part of him wanted to believe that Hicca would've survived. But why wouldn't she have come back? She would've have been welcomed back with open arms. She would've have been a hero. And where would she go? This was her home and it's not like she had someone waiting out there in the world for her. _Why wouldn't she come back to me?_ He thought sadly.

Shaking himself from his thoughts he addressed the teens, "It doesn't matter guys. Let's just get started with today's lesson." He noticed Tuffnut raise a hand in question. "Yes Tuffnut."

"Why is the symbol of the academy a Night Fury? Why not a Zippleback?" he asked.

"Or a Nightmare?" Snotlout interjected.

Sighing in frustration he answered, "It's to honor Hicca. That's why this academy was founded. To try to learn all we can about dragons and make them apart of our society. It's what she would've wanted," he said adding the last part with a sad breath.

With that the teens accepted his answered and they got started with the lesson of the day.

* * *

><p>Laying on the floor flat on her back, Hicca was panting heavily in exhaustion. It had been two months since she began her ninja training. Sensei Shou hadn't been lying when he said it would be tough. She had been working on her hand to hand combat skills by sparring with another member of the clan. She had been losing badly. Picking herself off the ground slowly she turned around to face her sparring partner. It was a girl around her age named Hinata. She was small girl, even shorter than Hicca with short black hair. She was a very good fighter though. Raising her aching arms slowly, Hicca got into her battle stance and prepared to fight. She was covered in sweat from the activity and her green tunic was soaking wet.<p>

"That's enough for today," said sensei Shou from the sidelines. With that both girls dropped their stances and bowed to each other. Hicca bowed and then turned away to look at her master. Hicca was feeling slightly discouraged at her loss. She had not been able to come close to beating anyone in her age group. Even the younger kids could easily beat her. She was clumsy and uncoordinated and she wasn't sure she would ever improve. Feeling a hand on her shoulder, she turned to

face Hinata, who was looking at her with concern.

"DaijÅ•bu Hicca-chan?" she asked shyly.

"Watashi wa genki Desu," Hicca said slowly. She was learning short and simple phrases from her stay. She wasn't always sure on the pronunciation but she seemed to speak it clearly enough.

Hinata giggled lightly at her answer and smiled. With a quick bow she left. Hicca smiled after her, most people were kind to her like Hinata was. But there were some people who harried her for the lack of skill and coordination. Sometimes it made her feel like she was back on Berk. But it was worse because she couldn't hurl a comeback without getting laughed at for the way she spoke.

"Is everything alright Hicca?" came sensei Shou's voice next to her.

Hicca turned to face him. He had obviously noticed her face fall. With a sigh, she explained, "Yes sensei. It's justâ€¦I don't seem to be getting better. I can't beat anyone in a spar. Not even the younger kids. Plus my weapons skills suck, I can't throw a shuriken or a kunai to save my life, and my stealth skills are horrible," she hung her head in disappointment.

Sensei Shou chuckled lightly, "You've only been training with us for two months Hicca. Of course you're not going to be as good as the others. Still, you are picking up what we've taught you fairly quickly," he said to reassure her.

Looking up in surprise she asked, "Really?"

"Yes. Don't be so hard on yourself. Your skills will improve with time. Just believe in yourself," he said holding her gaze so she could see the truth in his eyes.

With a smile, she nodded in thanks. Sensei Shou returned the smile and then left the ring to observe the other students and correct their forms. Sensei Shou was a kind man. He always said words to reassure her.

"Yowamushi," _Weakling. _Came a whisper behind her.

Hicca's face fell and her mood sunk as she recognized the voice behind her. Turning around she came face to face with the malicious sneer of Daigo. Daigo was the young man who had almost killed her with his shuriken. He was constantly harassing her and putting her down. She couldn't understand why he seemed to dislike her so much.

"Haisha," _Loser._ He said to further put her down.

Hicca's mind flashed back to the constants insults and treatment she received from her peers on Berk. Dropping her gaze to her feet, she fiddled with the end of her tunic as she waited for Daigo to harass her more. Submit and bear with it had always been Hicca's way of handling harassment, and it seemed nothing would change.

As Daigo prepared to hurl another insult at her, a voice cut in. "OY DAIGO!" said the voice behind him. Then a hand gripped his right

shoulder firmly before whipping him around. Then a fist firmly buried itself in his stomach forcing him to his knees in pain as he struggled to catch his breath.

Hicca looked up to her savior with a grateful smile, it was Mayumi. Mayumi had been the girl to save Hicca when she had been poisoned. She was a kind girl six years Hicca's senior. She would often reprimand Daigo's behavior and respond with painful consequences.

"Don't listen to him," Mayumi said with a reassuring smile. Then she took Hicca's hand and pulled her along. "Come on, time to eat," she said leading Hicca out of the training room.

Hicca smiled and let the older girl pull her along. Looking back, she was met with the glare of Daigo who was still hunched over on the ground in pain. She knew this wasn't the end of his harassing, but for now she was glad to see a bully get put in his place.

* * *

><p>Hicca and Mayumi sat together finishing off their rice balls. They were seated on a cliff overlooking a mass expanse of forest before them. They both sat in silence as they leaned back against Toothless's side. Hicca loved this strange grain they called rice. It was included in almost every meal. Plus it could be made into a whole bunch of wonderful things. Rice balls, apparently some kind of alcohol, and then there was that strange stuff called sushi that tasted delicious. As Hicca ate she looked out of the corner of her eye at Mayumi. She liked Mayumi a lot. One of the reasons was that Mayumi could speak her language, apparently having learned several from sensei Shou. She was also nice to her and would try her best to protect her from harassment by other members of the clan. Mayumi was apparently the best in the clan. She admired her, and hoped that she could at least be half as good as she was. She also wanted to be as confident as she was and hoped the training would help her with that.<p>

Mayumi ate in silence and glanced over to Hicca. Meeting her eyes, she gave her a warm smile. Hicca smile back shyly and averted her gaze. Mayumi had developed a soft spot for the girl. She tried her best to look out for her; but she wanted to see Hicca gain some confidence. Observing Hicca over the last few months, she noticed that Hicca hardly spoke to or spent time with any of the clan members her age. She would pretty much only interact with her dragon, Toothless, unless she was training. That was one of the reasons Mayumi took it upon herself to spend time with her. She assumed that one of the reasons was that Hicca couldn't fully speak their language. But she also sensed something deeper. An innate fear of interacting with people. She decided to just ask her, "Hey Hicca?" When the other girl looked over to her she continued, "How come I never see you talking to the other clan members?"

Hicca swallowed her last bite of the rice ball and looked down at the forest. "Wellâ€¦it's justâ€¦I can barely speak to them. It's hard to have a conversation you know?" she stammered out.

Mayumi raised an eyebrow. She could tell the girl wasn't being completely honest. "Is there another reason?" she pressed.

Hicca started fiddling with her hands as she remembered all the years of rejection she had faced on Berk. "Wellâ€¦it's just where I'm fromâ€¦everyone treated me like an outcast," she paused to take a breath before continuing, "My people are huge compared to yours. And me, I'm tiny. I was weaker than everyone else. So they constantly rejected me. I guess that stuff kind of leaves a mark on you," she finished sadly. Sighing she turned to Mayumi, "I'm sorry, listen to me blab about myself. You don't hear my sob story," she said with a fake smile.

Toothless could sense her melancholy mood and turned his head to nudge her face. That got Hicca to really smile. At least she had Toothless. As long as she had him, she could bear anything. She turned her head to smile at him and scratched him under the chin, making him purr.

"Rejection huh, just for looking and being different. I actually know a little about that," she heard Mayumi say. Turning to face her, she cocked her head to the side curiously. Then Mayumi elaborated, "You may have noticed that I look a little different from the others," she said while gesturing to herself.

Hicca had noticed. For one thing, Mayumi was very tall. She was six feet and towered over pretty much everyone in the clan. The other thing she noticed is that her eyes' shape weren't as pronounced as the others were. Her eyes were also blue. She had mostly just assumed she was just a rare case. With a nod she gave Mayumi the go ahead to continue.

"My mother was a Japanese women and my father was a sailor from a faraway land. They met, had a one night fling, my father left, and then my mother gave birth to me," she said with a smile, remembering her mother. "But then my mom got sick and then she died. She had no other family and no one wanted me," she said sadly. "People would say awful things to me. They'd say my blood was dirty, that I was a half breed, or a mongrel. They rejected me just because of the way I looked," she paused to look Hicca in the eyes. "Then the clan found me and took me in. They gave me a purpose and a family, and I couldn't be happier," she said with a fond smile.

Hicca took in Mayumi's story. "Wow Mayumi, I had no idea. I thought I had it rough, but at least I had a father and a home," she said feeling ashamed at complaining about her life while someone had a real reason to complain.

"It's ok Hicca. Our circumstances may not be exactly the same, but it's nice to meet someone who understands," Mayumi said.

Hicca nodded in understanding. It did feel nice to meet someone who understood her. She smiled at Mayumi genuinely and thanked her for telling her about her life. Mayumi nodded in acceptance before both girls turned to face the forest and the setting sun. While they sat there, Mayumi thought about what she could do to help Hicca. The young girl reminded her of herself when she was younger. She remembered being alone and used to rejection so much that she was afraid of people. She wanted Hicca to come out of her shell and bloom into a confident woman.

"You know what you need Hicca?" Mayumi said breaking the silence while tapping her chin in thought.

Hicca watched her go with an incredulous look on her face. Did that really just happen? Was she really going to call her big sister form

now on? She looked over at Toothless who was looking at her curiously. "And where were you a few seconds ago?" she said while pointing to her cheeks. The dragon just huffed and yawned indifferently. "Thank you for nothing, you useless reptile," she said glaring at her supposed protector.

"Come along now little sister. We have a lot of work to do staring tomorrow," Mayumi called out.

Hicca looked over to the other girl and saw her genuine, warm smile. She couldn't help but smile back. Maybe this would be a good thing. Mayumi was the best in the clan after all. Receiving one on one training from her could help her improve faster. Plus she could learn how to be more confident, like she was. Plus, it was nice to have someone care for her so much. She couldn't remember the last time someone had shown her so much affection besides Toothless.

Looking to her companion, she was met with a gummy grin. "I'm gonna get stronger hun'" she said with conviction. Toothless growled in agreement and opened his wings slightly. As if to say, _I know you will. And I'll get stronger with you__**.**_ With a smile Hicca followed after her new sister with Toothless in tow.

It was going to be tough, without a doubt. But she was willing to face this challenge. She was going to overcome it.

I will be strong.

* * *

><p>Hope you like. The next chapter will take place after a time skip of almost six years. And Hicca WILL BE AWESOME!

**As for the Ninjas in this world, I'm borrowing a collection of different ideas. Mostly stuff from ninja assassin that will have almost superhuman like abilities. **

Also contest. The antagonist of this story will be named _ the Scarred. Leaving the first name open for suggestions. Best one will be put in the story

Btw Hicca's age in my story = 14

Mayumi = 20

3. Chapter 3

The New Hicca

Walking the trail from Yorokobi village back to his castle, young Takuya was in a sour mood. Having gone into the village satisfy his need for female company, his horse had been stolen, the trek back to the castle had taken hours, and it was now nighttime. *"Why does my father even keep you around"* he said to the two samurai bodyguards behind him. Takuya was the son of his province's Feudal lord. That meant he could do anything he wanted. And he did. He would start fights, take things, harass women, and nobody would even dare to stop him. His bodyguards behind him hated and disapproved of his behavior.

But having sworn to loyalty to their master, his father, they held their tongues and protected the young man.

Takuya was fuming at the very thought that someone would dare steal from him. Him, of all people. If he ever found that person he would stab his eyes out and gut him like fish. As he continued to scheme of the horrible things he would do the person who stole his horse he and his body guards came to the part of the trail that cut through the forest. Suddenly to the right a rustling was heard in the trees. The company stopped and the body guards drew their swords. Takuya looked around trying to determine what could be the cause of the noise. A bird perhaps? Then suddenly to the left more rustling was heard.

"Who's out there?" One of the body guards yelled, positioning himself in front of the young lord. Then another rustle to the right was heard. Fearing the possibility of a bandit ambush the samurai stood on either side of the young man facing toward the trees. They stood with their sword at the ready as they scanned the tree line. Takuya would never admit it, but he was starting to get nervous.

Turning he scanned the trees to the right and put his hand over the hilt of his sword nervously.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" came shout behind him. Both bodyguard and young lord whirled around to find the other samurai was gone. Vanished without a trace. Strangely enough, it sounded as if his shout had come from above them.

Cursing under his breath the samurai came around the young lord and started searching all around for any signs of their mysterious stalker. Takuya was starting to sweat profusely. What had happened to the other bodyguard? He had been behind him just a few moments ago. They would have heard someone approach. Looking over the shoulder of his bodyguard, he listened intently. It was silent all around them he finally noticed. Suddenly breaking the silence a faint whooshing sound was heard. Glancing down he suddenly noticed that there was something sticking out of the bodyguard's neck. A dart. The bodyguard fell over to his side and remained motionless.

Drawing his sword and gripping it with both hands, Takuya whirled around. Putting on a bravado he called out to the forest, "You don't know who you're dealing with. I am the son of this province's Feudal lord! Messing with me is signing your own death warrant. Leave now and I'll even forgive the death of my bodyguards," with that, he waited for anything to indicate the attacker had left. He waited for what seemed like hours before he began to relax. There was no more rustling sounds. Perhaps his threat had worked. He was only slightly upset about the death of his guards, but he didn't dwell on it. He was the only person of real importance, he could just get new ones.

As he turned to continue on his way something fell in front of him in a heap. Jumping back with a shriek of terror, his blood ran cold as he saw what had fallen in front of him. It was his other bodyguard, the one who had vanished. Suddenly a loud rustling was heard coming to the right. Gripping his sword so hard it turned his knuckles white, he whirled around and prepared himself. The rustling kept getting louder and louder as Takuya's fear grew. He was drenched in

cold sweat, his knees were shaking, and he was quivering in fear and he tried to suppress his panic.

Then the rustling just stopped, leaving only silence. Takuya waited and listened, keeping his eyes on the tree line until he knew for sure it was safe. Suddenly from out of the tree line, something shot out and wrapped itself around his legs. Yelping, he looked down and noticed it was a black length of chain. Then the chain pulled, tightening and forcing his legs together, then it pulled him off his feet and onto his back. His head collided with the ground and he attempted to clear the cobwebs. Then the chain pulled on his body dragging him off the road and into the forest.

He yelled in fear as he frantically tried to grab onto something. He looked to see what was pulling the chain, but all he could make out was darkness. Suddenly the chain yanked him up and off the ground. As it lifted him into the air his face was smacked and cut by the branches of the trees. Breaking the top of the trees and looking down, he shrieked as he saw the ground getting further and further away. *"NO! NO! PLEASE!"* He began to shout desperately. Looking up, his eyes bugged out of his head as he could make out a pair of black wings attached to a creature pulling him into the sky. *_It can't be. That can't be a€œ*_ his thought was cut off as suddenly the chain unwrapped themselves from around him and he went hurdling toward the ground. With a hard crash he landed on the road he had just been traveling and black out.

After a few minutes he regained consciousness and took in his surroundings. He remembered that he was in danger. He tried to lift himself up but he couldn't move his right arm. His whole body was in pain as he lay there helpless. His head was still ringing as he tried to blink and refocus his vision. Looking up to the sky, he shut his eyes for a few moments. Opening them, everything was still blurry. Shutting them once again, he held them closed for a few moments before he opened them. He gasped as he saw a black shape looming over them. He couldn't make it out as it was still blurry. He assumed that he was seeing spots. Shutting his eyes once last time, he squeezed them tight and opened them once more. To his relief and then horror his vision was clear again. But now he could see that the black shape was a person. They loomed over them, dressed in all black, the lower part of their face was covered by a mask, and in their right hand was a sickle.

"Please, I can get you anything you want. Money, women, land, drugs, just please spare me," Takuya began to beg. The person didn't react just continued to stare at him blankly. Takuya had never been so afraid in his life. The person seemed to be staring into his very soul. *"What are you?"* He asked quietly.

"I am silence. I am stealth. I am shadow. Fear is my weapon; the shadows are my ally. I am a monster. I am a demon. I am death. I. AM. SHINOBI," the figure said menacingly. Then they raised their sickle, prepared to finish off the young man.

"NOOOOOO!" was the last thing Takuya shouted before the shinobi slashed her sickle across his throat. Takuya lost his voice as he felt the blood leaking from his neck. Desperately gasping for breath, his life drained out of him as he became weaker and weaker. With a final gasp his struggling ceased and he died.

The shinobi shook the blood off her weapon before putting it away. Reaching into her back pouch she pulled out a scroll containing the symbol of her clan. To let everyone know who had killed the Feudal lord's son. Hearing a rustling behind her, she turned around and smiled underneath her mask at the acid green eyes of her companion. Throwing down the scroll, she walked towards her companion. Reaching out, she scratched the dragon under his chin, earning a contented purr from the beast.

"Hey hun'. Good job," she said proudly.

The dragon looked into her eyes and crooned inquisitively.

"Yes hun'. We can go home. Mission accomplished," said the shinobi. With a croon of delight, the dragon crouched to allow the shinobi to hop on his back. Once she was securely on, he waited for his rider to give the signal to go. When she did, he obliged and leapt into the sky, beating his wings until they were airborne and then steered them towards home.

The shinobi pulled down her mask and took in a breath. Breathing in the scent of the countryside, she smiled to herself. She had completed her mission successfully and was glad to be headed back home. To her master, her family, and most of all her beloved sister.

* * *

><p>Flying through the clouds on Toothless, Hicca smiled to herself. She was amazed at how far she had come in six years. In the few weeks that Hicca began to train with Mayumi, she had begun to improve drastically. Mayumi was definitely tough on her. She woke Hicca up early, kept her up late, and spent hours drilling her in hand to hand combat and weapons training. Many times, she thought she would die from her intense training regimen, but she had persevered and become stronger for it. Her aim, balance, coordination, agility, stamina, strength, reflexes, and confidence had soared to new heights. She remembered the pride she felt when she had beaten her first opponent in a spar. Then within a year of her training she was made a Genin, allowing her to go on missions with higher level ninja (usually Mayumi). Those first missions had been fairly simple. They usually involved providing a distraction, surveying the area, or shadowing somebody. Hicca was apparently really good at not being noticed. She had had years of practice after all.<p>

Then within two years she had been made a Chunin. Allowing her to go on higher level missions by herself. She still remembered being offered her first assassination mission. She had objected to it. Then Sensei Shou had ordered her to shadow the target. After witnessing the man do horrible things, especially to women, things that made her stomach churn, she had accepted and followed through with it. She didn't revel in killing, but she accepted that some people had to go. Just like the Red Death had to be killed in order to free the dragons and save her people.

Hicca was now considered one of the most skilled members in the clan. Jumping up ranks and improving in skill in the short time she had was unheard of. Sensei Shou only laughed and had said he had told her so. Besides her skills as a ninja, Hicca had also grown as a person. She was fearless, confident, outgoing, and strong. She had made friends

with many members of the clan and wasn't afraid of anybody, she was confident she could take down almost any opponent.

She had also made her own mark on the clan. Her outfit consisted of a standard ninja shozoku, but she wore leather boots with a steel toes instead the split toed tabi boots along with black steel shin guards and armored knee pads. Under her shozoku was her chainmail shirt and black skin tight undershirt. Around her neck she wore a black scarf (for a little flair). On her back was a Ninjato, a ninja sword a little under two feet in length. Strapped to her left leg was her blow gun for shooting darts covered in poison. On her right leg was a small knife holster for a single kunai she could reach for at a moment's notice. Behind her, at her waist were two pouches. In one were kunai, shuriken, poisons, darts, and other things useful to a ninja. In the other was her other preferred weapon of choice, her Kusarigama. On her arms were spiked metal arm cuffs that ran from her wrists to her just under her elbow. They were of her own invention and were now worn by the entire clan. Made from steel and colored black, they were dubbed the 'Dragon Claws'. They were very handy in a fight as they could be used to fight an armed opponent if you suddenly became unarmed. The spikes on the outside and top of them could be used as make shift weapons by raking it across an opponent. Plus, they had a nasty surprise, a special mechanism could be triggered via a small dial under each one that could fire the spikes along the top with enough force to pierce skin. On her hands she wore black fingerless gloves that were padded on the knuckles as to making punching easier on her hands.

She now stood at 5'6, having hit a growth spurt around her 17th birthday and her face had lost all of its baby fat. Her cheek bones and other facial features were now more pronounced and she had grown into her nose. Her auburn hair had grown over the years and was tied in a single braid that she usually wore over right shoulder and reached down just above her breasts. She had filled out a little over the years but she wouldn't be wearing one of the breast plates her Viking sisters wore in her lifetime. She had come to terms with the fact that she would never be as big or brawny as her people, and she was completely fine with that.

Toothless's stomach grumbled and he let out a grumpy growl. With a smile she patted him on the side, "We're almost there hun'. Then we can eat," she said to him. Toothless grumbled in annoyance but kept on flying at a steady pace. Her companion had grown along with her. Getting even longer and sporting an even greater wingspan, Toothless's speed had increased drastically. Through training of his own, he had been able to push his shot limit to 10. Hicca wasn't entirely sure if this was due to training, or simply Toothless getting older. Being the first documented Night Fury, there was still a lot about him she didn't know. Nevertheless she loved him with all her heart. Hicca had improved her saddle designs over the years. It now consisted of black leather, as did the tailfin, and had hand rails and levers, the latter of which could be used to lock the tailfin open so Toothless could mostly fly on his own. He couldn't do any complicated maneuvers, but it was good enough. She had managed to make a tailfin he could fully operate on his own, but he preferred to fly with her at the controls.

Seeing the mountain that was the clan's hideout, Hicca smiled. "There it is hun'," she said to Toothless. Seeing it he sped up slightly. Coming to the waterfall that hid one of the secret entrances,

Toothless dropped down slightly before closing his wings, passing through the falls, and touching down in the entrance of the base. Dismounting Toothless, Hicca stretched before walking down the tunnel and further into the base. Toothless followed behind her closely as she turned this way and that, led entirely by memory. Finally reaching the part of the mountain that contained the living quarters, Hicca heard the sound of her clan members talking, laughing, and training. Passing by some open doors, the other clan members called out to her in greeting, welcoming her back from her mission. She smiled and waved back while continuing on her way. The younger clan members bowed to her as she passed. She acknowledged them with a smile and a nod. Making her way to the quarters of her master, she knocked on the door frame.

"Enter," came a voice from inside. Sliding the door open, Hicca stepped inside and allowed Toothless to enter before shutting the door behind her. In the back of the room was her master, going over documents which contained requests from the people for missions. Their clan served the people. Performing missions that ranged from assassinations, kidnapping, spying, finding lost family members, to stealing documents that proved the ownerships of land and other property. Stopping a short distance away, Hicca knelt down and waited for her master to speak.

"Ah, Hicca. How did the mission go?" he said looking up from the documents.

"Good Sensei. The mission was a success. I was unseen and I left the calling card of the clan," she answered.

"Very good Hicca. You have done well. Missions involving the assassinations of a noble of such rank are usually handled by Jonin," he said calmly.

Hicca responded with a knowing nod. She had been surprised when he had given her the mission. She expected it to go to Mayumi or some other Jonin. "I know master, and thank you," she said gratefully.

"You have grown very strong over these last few years Hicca. Both physically and mentally. I couldn't be more proud of you," he continued. Hicca hid a smile at his praise. "With you at our side, the clan has gained much infamy, and our former status has been returned to us. Thanks to you, and your dragon of course," he added after seeing Toothless's annoyed look. Toothless preened in pride. It was true. The pair had become infamous. Rumors of Toothless and his rider had made their clan the most feared of the ninja clans.

"I'm glad I could help the clan Sensei. At the least I can do," she answered.

"You are very humble Hicca. And as for the success of your mission, you have shown that your skills are at a higher level than an ordinary Chunin. As such, I hereby raise your rank to that of a Jonin," he added.

Hicca's head shot up to look into her master's face. She thought he must have been joking. Seeing no hint of deception her eyes widened in shock. "What!?" was all she could think to say. Sensei Shou only chuckled lightly. With a smile he nodded at her, confirming what he

had said earlier was no lie. "But Sensei Shou, I-I've only been in training for six years. It usually takes over a decade to become a Jonin," she stammered out.

"Well Hicca, you are a special case. Besides, you had a really good teacher," he said with knowing smile.

Hicca looked down and smiled, knowing he was referring to Mayumi. Brushing same auburn hair out of her face, she nodded in acceptance of her new rank and thanked her master. He accepted her thanks before dismissing her. She left the room with Toothless behind her, and smile plastered on her face as she made her way to the kitchen area to eat.

"Hey little sis, welcome back," came the voice of her sister. Glancing to her left, having just come out of the training room, was Mayumi, who was giving her a warm smile.

With a quick dash she ran to her sister before throwing her arms around her. "Hey big sis. I missed you," she said honestly. She had come to love Mayumi as if she was actually her sister, a sentiment which the older girl shared.

Patting her head Mayumi hugged her back, "I missed you too. How was the mission?" she asked.

Pulling back, Hicca smiled proudly, "A complete success," she answered.

Mayumi smiled, "I knew you would pull it off no problem. Good job," she said praising her. Then a grumble was heard as Toothless came up and bumped Mayumi in her leg. "And good job to you too Toothless. I'm sure you made sure Hicca was safe and sound," she added while scratching Toothless under the chin. Toothless rumbled in agreement, Toothless like Mayumi a lot. She cared for his human as much as he did, and that made her ok in his book.

"Oh and Sensei Shou also made me a Jonin," Hicca added in excitement.

"Oh my gosh, Hicca, that's amazing!" Mayumi said in congratulations.

"I know right," Hicca said enthusiastically in agreement.

"Well come on then, we're going to celebrate," she said with a smile before turning around and heading toward the kitchen.

Hicca smile and followed after her.

Behind the retreating Hicca, a figure glared at her back maliciously. Reaching into his knife holster, pulled out his kunai. Aiming at the middle of her back, he gave a sinister smile before throwing it. Within a foot of the girl, she turned around and snatched it out of the air. Looking down at the kunai, she examined it for a moment before looking up to him.

With a scowl she greeted him, "Daigo."

"*Welcome back loser,*" he said with a smirk. This had become a

normal way of greeting her. * "Did you screw up as usual" .

* "I completed the mission without a single mistake," * Hicca answered with a glare. Daigo still liked to harass Hicca. She still didn't understand why he disliked her so much. Still, with confidence in her own abilities, Daigo's words were nothing to her. She tossed his kunai back to him, which he caught and placed in his holster.

* "You shouldn't have been the one to go on that mission. It should have been a Jonin," he said with a growl. Daigo had wanted that mission for himself. Getting to kill a noble of such high rank was proof of your skill and abilities. For it to go to a Chunin like Hicca, Daigo had been insulted that she was considered over him.

* "Sensei Shou was the one who gave her the mission Daigo. If you have a problem take it up with him. Oh, and by the way, Hicca has officially been made a Jonin," * Mayumi said with a smirk.

Daigo's eyes widened in disbelief. How could this girl have already achieved the same rank as him in such a short time? He glanced back to Hicca with a cold glare, hate evident in his eyes. * "You have not been in training long enough to be a Jonin. You are unworthy of that rank," * he spat.

Hicca bristled at his insult. * "I was trained personally by the best member of the clan. I've proven my skills by completing all my mission successfully. If Sensei Shou thinks I am worthy then so do I," * she replied back resolutely.

Daigo stepped forward, trying to intimidate her. * "If you really think that, then fight me," * he said coolly. At seeing Hicca raise an eyebrow he pressed on, * "Prove that you have the skill to be a Jonin. Beat me and then I'll accept it. Or are you just a weakling?" * He added the last part with a sneer.

Hicca's fists clenched at her sides. Daigo was still calling her weak and she hated it. Maybe it was about time to put him in his place. Still, she knew Daigo was baiting her. Daigo was a Jonin for a reason after all, he was very skilled in combat. There was no guarantee she would beat him. What did she have to prove to him anyway?

Her deliberation was cut short as Mayumi stepped in front of her. She stepped forward, looming over Daigo with her superior height and glared daggers at him. * "Enough Daigo. Hicca doesn't have to prove anything to anyone. But if you really want an opponent so badly, I'd be happy to oblige you," * Mayumi said coldly, cracking her knuckles threateningly.

At this Daigo backed off. Mayumi was his better. The best fighter in the clan, she had always hated him. When Hicca had become her sister that disdain had only grown. In sparring sessions between them Mayumi was merciless, not stopping until Daigo couldn't leave the ring without being carried out. A growl tore his attention from the girl. Hicca's dragon was snarling at him in warning. The dragon hated him as much a Mayumi did. It had never forgotten how he had almost killed her. With a last glare to Hicca, he turned around and went on his way.

Mayumi and Toothless glared after him.

Hicca let out a breath, "I still don't get why he hates me so much," she said with a groan.

"He's just a bastard is all. Don't let him get to you," Mayumi said to reassure her. Seeing her sister smile and nod, she grabbed her hand and led her to get something to eat. Toothless following close behind.

* * *

><p>With the sun setting, Hicca and Mayumi sat on their familiar spot on the cliff's edge overlooking the forest. They ate their rice balls in silence and just enjoyed each other's company. Behind them Toothless laid down with his head between his paws and let the two girls lean against his side.<p>

"So Hicca," Mayumi said breaking the silence. Hicca paused in her chewing and looked over to her sister. Meeting her eyes, Mayumi continued, "Have you told Sensei Shou that you want to leave the clan yet?" She asked casually.

Hicca's eyes widened and swallowed her food. Then she let out a sigh, "No," she said putting down the remainders of her rice ball. The subject of her wanting to leave the clan suddenly causing her appetite to disappear.

With a frown, Mayumi reached out and pinched Hicca in her cheek. The girl let out a yelp of pain before Mayumi let go of her cheek. This was how Mayumi would reprimand her little sister. Letting Hicca rub her cheek she spoke, "You need to tell him Hicca. Though I personally wouldn't mind if you didn't and stayed here forever," she said, adding the last part playfully.

Hicca smiled. "I know, it's just thatâ€|most people never leave the clan. How do I know he would let me leave? And then it also feels like I'm betraying him for all he has done for me. It's even worse now that he made me a Jonin," she said in exasperation. She hugged her knees to her chest and sighed. Being in a ninja clan was a lifetime commitment. The only exception that her clan made was if a kunoichi was with child. Then they would be given the chance to leave the clan and live a normal life for the child, or stay and let that child become a ninja as well.

"Why would you want to go back to Berk anyway? From the stories you told me, you have it much better here," Mayumi asked curiously.

"It's justâ€|I miss dragons and the smell of the sea. I miss my village and the cold icy air of winterâ€|and some part of me wants to see my dad. To confront him and show him how much I've changed," she answered wistfully. "Wouldn't you want to see your father if you had the chance," she asked her sister.

Mayumi searched Hicca's face. She could see the longing in her eyes. "Yeah I suppose your right," she said conceding her point. "It's justâ€|I'd miss you," she said quietly.

"I'd miss you too sis," Hicca said honestly. She meant that. Mayumi would always have a place in Hicca's heart. "But I don't want to do

this for the rest of my life," she said gesturing vaguely to nothing in particular.

Mayumi nodded knowingly. She wanted what was best for Hicca. A small, selfish part of her wanted Hicca to stay with the clan. Hicca was her beloved little sister and she cared for her dearly. But as her big sister, she would do all she could to support Hicca's choices, even if she didn't like them.

With a sigh, the two girls settled back against Toothless and took in the setting sun. Mayumi was content in the moments she would have left with her sister, and prayed that they would last a little while longer. Hicca thought about what she would be leaving behind if she left the clan. Mayumi was the person she would miss the most. But her thoughts of Berk couldn't be shaken from her mind. Apart of her wanted to see everyone she had left behind. To show them how far she had come.

With a deep sigh, she settled back and wondered how everyone was doing.

* * *

><p>*_* Speaking Japanese

Nearly six years later

**New chapter. Hope everyone likes. **

Hicca = 19-20

feel free to review and tell me what you think of characters and offer ideas

Mayumi = 25-26

4. Chapter 4

The Old Enemy

Almost six years had passed since the war with the dragons had ended. Berk now fully lived in peace with them. There had been some trying times, with other groups trying to learn the secrets to dragon riding as a means of warfare. But with the chief and the dragon academy, led by Ash Hofferson, they had prevailed and kept the peace and stability of Berk going. It was four months before the annual feast in celebration of Hicca's victory and disappearance. A joyous occasion for all, the whole tribe would gather to feast, drink, and honor their lost tribesman. But two individuals always felt only sorrow.

One individual was Ash Hofferson. Now 20 years old, he had grown up to be a strong man, and the epitome of a Viking. There was even talk that he would be chosen to be the next chief of the tribe. Standing at 6'1, he was the tallest among his friends, matched only by Fishlegs. His face had matured, leaving him with a firm strong chin and sporting stubble. He wore a red tunic with his metal shoulder pads from when he was a child. Draped over his shoulders was a light covered fur cape, clasped together in front with a circle of iron. On

his arms, he wore fingerless fur gloves that extend up to just below the elbow. He had blue pants with spiked on running down the sides. He also wore light colored fur boots that came up to just below his knees. His blue eyes were always fierce and determined. His long blonde hair was braided and ran down the right side of his head over his shoulder. Ash had everything going for him in his life right now. He was the most skilled Viking of his generation, the head of the dragon academy, the best rider on the island, the dragon racing champion, and maybe even the next chief. But there was one thing Ash was lacking, which his parents had been subtly hinting at for years.

Like now for instance. Ash was currently in his parents' house eating breakfast with them. Although he had his own home now, he tried to drop by and share a meal with them every week. His parents were currently going on about how Ash had no one special in his life and how he and his peers would probably be getting married in a few years. Ash wasn't fully listening, not really caring about the subject.

"So I was thinking dear. Maybe you should let your father and I find you a woman," his mother said.

That got his attention. Plopping his spoonful of porridge back in the bowl he looked up and into the blue eyes of his mother. "That's ok mom. You really don't have to," he said politely.

"Come on now dear. You haven't got anyone in your life. And Ruffnut is really the only girl on the island, and I'm sure you've expressed you have no interest in her," his mother pressed.

"I just haven't found anybody mom. Besides, with our peace with the dragons it's not like its imperative I get married so soon. I've still got time," he argued.

"Yes dear, but you don't seem to be looking at all," his mother insisted.

Before Ash could retort, his father cut in. "Your mother is right son," his father said looking him in the eyes. "You're a man now. It's your duty to take a wife and start a family of your own. You have a responsibly to keep the Hofferson clan going," he said firmly.

Ash sighed. He knew his father had a point. His parents had already been married at his age. Now he was too old for them to form a marriage contract with another family. Plus he did have a duty to his family. Relenting he looked to both of his parents, "You're right," looking to his mother he said, "Mom. Why don't you start spreading the word to other villages that I'm looking for a wife. Then after the annual anniversary of our peace with the dragons, I'll start meeting with any potential candidates," he offered.

His mother clapped her hands together in excitement. "Oh I knew you'd come around dear. Leave it to your mom. I'll find you the perfect woman," she said with a wide smile.

Ash gave her a small smile back and continued with his porridge. They finished their breakfast in silence before Ash left to start his duties. It was his day for patrol, leaving Fishlegs to teach at the

academy. Additionally he was also going to help with the fishing and hunting. Walking through the streets of Berk, he was followed closely by Stormfly. He walked with his head down as he thought about the conversation he had with his parents. Honestly Ash could have been married several times over by now. Wherever he went, women practically threw themselves at him. Being a skilled warrior, a dragon rider, and a potential candidate for chief made him quite the catch. Still, Ash always kept a polite indifference with the women he met. One reason being he didn't see the need to rush into a marriage. With their village at peace with the dragons and no longer under constant threat of a premature demise he didn't see the need. A lot of people agreed with him and his peers were also not expecting to marry anytime too soon. The other reason was Hicca. Over the years his feelings for the missing girl hadn't diminished. He knew that waiting for a person who may not even be alive was foolish. But he was afraid of finding someone, only for Hicca to suddenly reappear out of thin air.

"ASH!" came a shout from above pulling him from his thoughts. Out of the sky came Gustav Larson on his yellow and purple Monstrous Nightmare.

Noticing his panicked expression, Ash let him compose himself before speaking, "Gustav, what wrong?"

"I was out on my morning flight with Fanghook when I saw some ships in the distance, approaching Berk fast. There's about five of them and they look like their armed," he said in one breath.

Ash took in the information before coming up with a plan, "Ok Gustav, find the chief and tell him what you just told me. I'm gonna get the others and see what these guys want," he ordered. When Gustav nodded in confirmation and took off he mounted Stormfly and flew toward the academy.

* * *

><p>Flying over the waters away from Berk, Ash held a determined expression on his face. His peers followed behind him on their dragons as they scanned the distance for the ships. With the small number of ships Gustav had reported, Ash deemed that only the original riders would be needed. There also no real evidence indicating that this company meant to attack.<p>

Seeing the five ships in the distance he held up his hand to stop the riders. "Alright guys. I'm going to see what these guys want. You hang back and watch. If they start attacking, take them out, sink their ships, and let the current take them," he ordered.

"Right," came a collective response from the riders.

Picking up speed, Ash and Stormfly pulled ahead to meet the ships. Coming up in front of the lead ship and hovering, he kept just within shouting distance. Taking a breath, he prepared to address the ship's crew, "Attention unknown ships. You are trespassing within the waters of Berk. Drop anchor and state your business or we will attack with our dragons," he shouted in warning. He watched as the murmured amongst themselves and took in their ships. They were carrying catapults and the men were armed with crossbows. Definitely anti-dragon weapons. He looked at their sails and was surprised he

couldn't make out the symbol. It wasn't familiar to him. Suddenly Stormfly gave a squawk in alarm before flapping her wings and gaining a few feet in altitude. Ash saw several crossbow bolts pass right through the area he and Stormfly had just been hovering in. Scowling, Ash looked down and saw the men loading the catapults and preparing to aim at him.

With a war cry Ash directed Stormfly to dive and start passing over the ships. Then he directed her to use her fire to take out the catapults first. Soon enough he heard the cries of the other riders as they joined in the assault.

Fishlegs and Meatlug began intercepting the rocks that the catapults launched and firing them back as lava blasts, rendering the catapults useless. Snotlout and Hookfang passed over the ships while setting fire to the sails. The twins started filling up one ship with their dragon's flammable gas. The crew of that ship jumped overboard as they knew what was coming next. Then Tuffnut ordered his dragon head ignite the gas, reducing the ship to splinters. After taking out some catapults, Ash had Stormfly use her fire on the deck of the ships. With her fire's heat rivalling the sun's, she burned holes in the ships, sinking them.

When only ship left afloat, Ash gave a signal for the riders to hang back. Directing Stormfly over the ship, she hovered and allowed Ash to drop down onto the ship's deck, equipped with his battle axe. The crew members drew their weapons and glared at him. Ash hung his axe over his shoulder casually before addressing them, "Last chance gentlemen. Surrender or this gets a lot uglier," he warned.

The men paused for a moment and glanced at each other. Then one charged at Ash with a war cry and slashed at him vertically. Ash stepped to the left and then slammed the butt of his axe between the man's eyes, rendering him unconscious. As another man came rushing at Ash with his spear at the ready Ash drew his hatchet from his belt and hurled it at the man. The hatchet's blade sunk into the man's right shoulder and blood leaked out from the wound soaking through his shirt. He immediately stopped his charge and screamed in pain. As the remaining two crew members prepared to charge at him Stormfly hurled spikes at them from the air. The spikes pierced their legs and arms and they fell to the ground. The spikes with their poison started to lock their muscles up.

Ash surveyed the deck, looking at the state of the men. He smiles to himself, satisfied that the men weren't in any condition to try and fight him. Suddenly a groan came from the man lying at his feet. He was starting to come around. Ash delivered a swift kick to the man's side, forcing him to roll over. Ash kneeled down and grabbed the man by his tunic, pulling him up to eye level. He swung his right hand across the man's jaw, making sure not to knock him out again.

"Why were you headed to Berk? What do you have against us?" he demanded.

The man sneered at him. "We came for the chief's head. This is only the beginning," he said evilly.

"Who sent you?" Ash said through gritted teeth.

"Siver. It was Siver the Scarred," the man said. With that, the man

quickly popped something into his mouth and swallowed before Ash could react. Then he started to spasm violently. Ash dropped the man and stepped back. The man started to foam at the mouth before his eyes rolled to the back of his head and with a final gasp he died.

Ash cursed silently before looking to the other men. They were all dead, the foam at their mouth evidence that they had perished the same way as their crewmate had. With another curse, he whistled for Stormfly. His dragon landed on the deck of the ship and crouched for him to get on. He mounted and joined his friend in the sky.

"What happened man?" Snotlout asked.

"They poisoned themselves," Ash answered.

"What were they after?" asked Fishlegs nervously.

"The chief's head apparently. Let's get back to Berk and report to the Stoick," he orders before directing Stormfly back to Berk.

They flew back in silence as Ash processed what had happened. Whoever this supposed leader was, Ash had never heard of him. But he knew this man was dangerous. Or foolish. No one picked a fight with Berk anymore, not with their dragons.

With the leader still out there, Ash knew that this wasn't the end.

* * *

><p>Stoick the Vast paced the great hall, muttering to himself lowly with his hands balled in fists at his sides. Ash had told him what one of the men had said and it sparked a rage inside him at the name of the company's leader. "Are you sure he said Siver lad?" he asked for the third time.<p>

Ash stood with his arms crossed as he watched his chief. He hadn't seen him this riled up before. "Yes chief, Siver the Scarred. I'm sure of it," he responded firmly. As the chief went back to pacing he caught pieces of what he was saying. Curious he decided to ask, "Who is this Siver anyway? I've never heard of him."

Before the chief could speak, Gobber, who had been silent the entire time cut in, "He's bad news. He was an enemy of the tribe since before your time lad." Gobber paused to take a drink from his mug hand attachment. He then rubbed his forehead in exasperation.

"So what does he have against Berk? Why is he after Chief Stoick?" he asked. "You think he wants our dragons?" he added. That's what most people who came up against the Hooligans were after. Both the Outcasts and the Berserkers had wanted to learn the secrets to training and riding them.

"No," Gobber answered. "Siver and the chief's feud goes way back. Their families have been going at it since the time of their grandfathers," he continued. "He used to go by Siver the Scarrer. Him and the chief had a reckoning a few decades ago," pausing he turned to Stoick and raised an eyebrow. "I thought you killed him Stoick."

"I thought I had. In our final battle I wounded him gravely. Before I could finish him off he ran like a coward. I tried going after him, but dragons who had been drawn by the scent of blood came. I was forced to defend myself and he got away. I assumed he died from his wounds. Obviously I was wrong," he explained with a scowl.

Ash frowned at hearing the story. What kind of Viking ran from a fight? It was an honor to die in battle. Defeat at the hands of a worthy opponent was a death every Viking dreamed of. Obviously this man was a coward.

"He wants to end my bloodline. As the last of the Haddocks," the chief paused as his face fell. His heart clenched at having basically said his daughter was gone. Shaking himself from his thoughts, he continued, "As the last of the Haddocks, he'll be determined to take my head," he finished.

"Let him come," said Spitelout. "We'll rain fire down from the skies," he said puffing out his chest.

"Siver is a coward. He won't reveal himself, not after the last time we fought," the chief said lowly. Turning to Ash he issued orders, "Start spreading word to the other tribes. Tell him that Siver is back and that I'm looking for him with any luck one of our allies will hear word of his location. I want double patrols. This isn't the end of this," he said darkly.

At his orders Ash nodded in confirmation before running out of the room. He made a beeline for the academy. This was serious news. At the worst, war was on the horizon. He steeled himself. He would face it. He would rise to the challenge. He would defend him home, his family, his friends, and their way of life.

* * *

><p>NEW CHAPTER. Hoped you liked it. Anyway at the concern of a guest reveiwer i edited the last chapter. Nothing major just Hicca is now 5'6 instead of five four. In my head female Hicca would be even shorter than male Hiccup. Plus i thought making her shorter would mean she would be more underestimated. Then it would be all the more surprising when she kicks your ass.

5. Chapter 5

The Final Mission

Hicca was walking slowly to the quarters of Sensei Shou, she was nervous as could be. She had been summoned to his quarters so suddenly as she was sparring with another member of the clan. A younger clan member interrupted the sparring session and told her that Sensei Shou wanted to see her. Asking if it was for a mission, the young boy said that he said he wanted to speak to her. With a nod, she bowed to her sparring partner, thanked the boy, and proceeded to Sensei Shou's quarters. Reaching his door, she wrapped her knuckled on the frame and waited for a response.

"Enter,"* came the voice of her master. Sliding the door open, she entered and walked toward her master. He was looking over documents

again. Stopping a couple feet away from him and kneeled before him. She waited for him to speak, her anxiousness growing by the second. Finally he looked up and into her eyes. Then he placed his documents on the floor and continued to look at her for a few moments. Finally after what seemed like an eternity of silence, he spoke, "Is there something you need to tell me Hicca?"

Hicca swallowed nervously before answering, "Uhmâ€¦no master. I don't think so," she said as calmly as she could. Sensei Shou kept a blank expression as he continued to stare at her.

"So you don't want to leave the clan then?" he asked with a raised eyebrow.

Hicca stiffened at his question. How had he known that? She had only ever told Mayumi about her desire to leave the clan. She stared at her Sensei, unsure of what she should say for herself. Sighing in defeat, she finally found her voice, "Yes master," pausing she looked into his eyes so he could see the truth in her voice at her next words. "It's not that I'm not grateful for everything that you and the clan had done for me, but I don't want to do this for the rest of my life. I miss exploring, and dragons, and my home," she said in earnest. _And my father, _she added in her head. She waited for Sensei Shou to respond. She couldn't tell what he was thinking. Was he mad at her? Disappointed?

"You do know Hicca, that being in a ninja clan is a lifelong commitment. You'd normally only be allowed to leave if you became pregnant. You understand this right?"

Hicca nodded in confirmation and waited for her Sensei to make his decision. She was surprised when he suddenly gave her a small smile. It was warm and full of understanding. "But I will make a special exception for you," he said.

Hicca's jaw dropped. She was utterly speechless. Was he really going to let her leave the clan that easily? "Really?" was all she could get out.

"As the rider of the Shadow Dragon, I sense that misfortune would befall the clan if I kept you here against your will. And you have done more for this clan than anyone that you deserve your chance to determine your own fate," he added with resolution.

Hicca sat there dumbfounded. She couldn't believe what she was hearing. Her master was letting her leave the clan. She felt a rush of relief at she finally took it in. Her face broke into a smile and she had to fight the urge to leap up and hug her Sensei. "Thank you Sensei," she said honestly. She looked down as she started to go over what she needed to do before she left.

"However," her Sensei said, making her look up and stopping her planning. "As your Sensei I can let you go. But, I see you and all my students as my children, as such I can't let you leave without knowing you are strong enough to take care of yourself," he explained. Seeing that Hicca wasn't sure where he was going. "As such, I'm going to make you a deal."

"What kind of deal?" Hicca asked curiously.

"A wager," he said. He paused a moment before elaborating, "A final mission to test and prove your skills. If you complete the mission successfully, you may go, but should you fail, then you agree to stay for another three years of training. After the end of the three years, you may leave," he explained.

"What's the mission?" she asked nervously. A mission like for her freedom definitely wasn't going to be a simple mission.

"An assassination," Sensei Shou answered. "Of a very high ranking noble. It is to be done in public. The target will be at the palace of the Feudal lord of the north. His castle is located on a cliff, which is why I believe that you may be the only one who can complete this mission," he finished.

Hicca took in the information. This wasn't going to be an easy mission. Located on a cliff and believing she was the only one who could do it, indicated he meant that a getaway was only possible with Toothless.

"Show them that we are to be feared. That the corrupt nobles are not untouchable," he said cutting through her thoughts.

Hicca nodded. She didn't like the terms but she thought they were fair. She shouldn't be allowed to leave at all. It was within his right to make it hard for her. "So who's the target?"

Sensei Shou paused for a moment. The expression on his face was serious, indicating that what he was about to say was no joke. "The Shogun," he answered calmly.

* * *

><p>Hicca stood at the edge of the cliff as she went over the events of her meeting with Sensei Shou. The Shogun was the highest level target in all of Japan. A Jonin of only the highest level and skill should even be offered the mission.<p>

"So the Shogun huh," said Mayumi behind her. After she had told Mayumi everything that had happened, the older girl was as shocked as she was. "This is a big one," she said in wonder.

"I know," Hicca said with a knowing nod. Beside her, Toothless was sensing her anxiety and nudged against her hand. Hicca raised her hand and scratched him on the head. The feeling of his scales was comforting to her.

"And he wants you to do it in public," Mayumi added.

"Yes. It's to strike fear into the nobles. To show them that they aren't untouchable. That even the Shogun isn't safe from us," he said quietly. There was a good deal of corruption under the current Shogun's rule. Samurai, lords, their sons, many of them had done horrible thing by hiding behind their rank and status. Her clan had been asked to assassinate many of them. It was believed that the Shogun's son would make a better leader. There had been stories about how he was trying to fight the corruption as best he could.

"A bow is your best shot," Mayumi offered helpfully. "We have the blueprints to the palace, we should go over them as best as we

can."

Hicca nodded in agreement.

"You know Hicca, you don't have to do this," Mayumi said with a hint of worry in her voice. "You can just stay another three years. There's so much more you can learn, and you could get so much stronger," she said.

"I know. But a part of me wants to do this. I want to put everything I've learned into this mission. I want to prove to myself how far I've come," she said firmly.

Mayumi sighed. Coming up beside Hicca, she looked at her face. In her eyes she saw fire and determination. She truly wanted to do this. And as her big sister, it was her duty to help her. Even if it meant her success would let her leave.

"Then come on little sister. We've got work to do," Mayumi said firmly. With that, she turned and began making the way to the hideout.

Hicca turned and followed after her big sister. Toothless followed behind her closely. She thought about everything she was going to have to do. The Shogun would be at the palace in a week. She had a few days to prepare and plan. Then she would have to leave two days in advance so she could arrive the night before he arrived. She was thankful she had Toothless. Flying meant that she had more time to plan as heading to the castle on horseback would take longer. Then she would have to sneak into the castle and hide until morning. Then she would have to get in range to shoot the Shogun and get before she was killed. It would be so much easier if she could just kill him in his sleep.

As she went over the details, she trembled in excitement. All of her training had led up to this. It was sink or swim. With her freedom being the thing on the line.

* * *

><p>It was the morning two days before the Shogun was set to arrive at the palace. Hicca woke up early all nerves. As she did her morning exercises and ate her clan members were wishing her luck. The entire clan had heard about her mission, and many believed that she could pull it off. Some were skeptical, believing that Hicca needed more training and that a more experienced Jonin should be handling this mission. Hicca couldn't blame them. Mayumi was way more qualified for a mission of this degree.<p>

As she saddled up Toothless Mayumi was calling out pointers and tips. Hicca half listened and respond with nods and 'yes sister'. Once Toothless was fully saddled, she checked her pouches and weapons to make sure she was fully equipped. Then she made her way to the armory, alone as Mayumi stayed with Toothless. Reaching the armory, she reached out to slide the door open, and was surfside when it opened by itself. On the other side was Daigo. She hadn't seen Daigo at all since word of her mission spread. He looked at her with an unpleasant expression, but it wasn't the usual hatred. She stepped aside and let him pass her. He walked with his head down. She watched him go curiously, surprised that he hadn't said a word to her. As she

turned to enter the armory he called out to her.

"Good luck Hicca," he said with a smile.

Hicca whirled around surprised. The smile on his face was small, but it looked real. No hint of evil that she could detect. She gave him a nod and he turned and continued on his way. Walking to the rack of bows she grabbed her personal bow and a quiver of arrows before leaving the armory and heading back to Toothless. Placing her bow in the special pocket on Toothless's saddle, she led him to the waterfall entrance in silence. Mayumi walked with them, nervous for Hicca and chewing the inside of her cheek. Reaching the falls, she mounted Toothless and looked to her sister.

Mayumi looked hesitant as she searched for words to say. Finally she reached out her hand and grabbed Hicca's. "Just come back Hicca. I don't care if you succeed or not. Just come back," she said quietly.

Hicca nodded and reached down to hug Mayumi. Mayumi returned the hug before patting Toothless on the head and stepping back. Toothless rumbled in contentment. And looked into her eyes. He sent her a look saying he would look after Hicca.

With a final silent exchange, Hicca gave Toothless the go ahead. Tensing his body he leapt through the wall of water and flapped his wings to gain altitude. Leveling out at a comfortable height, Hicca directed him north. Toothless crooned in concern, sensing her anxiety. Hicca patted him on the side in appreciation.

"It's ok hun'. We got this," she said with as much confidence as she could. Toothless growled in agreement before setting his focus ahead of them and on reaching their destination.

* * *

><p>Hicca and Toothless rested on a cliff, far away from the palace. Hicca watched everything from her spy glass. It was late in the evening and she was waiting for the sun to set. Then she would fly over with Toothless and infiltrate it alone. Then she would hide until morning before proceeding with the mission.<p>

Toothless looked up from his fish and warbled at her. Hicca turned his attention to her and smiled at her companion. He was trying to distract her and make sure she ate. Walking over to him, she rubbed his head and sat down against him. Then she pulled a rice ball from her pouch and ate it slowly. Finishing it, she got up and stretched, then she pulled out the blueprints from her dragon's saddlebag and went over them again. She reviewed them for about an hour before putting them away. Then she got up and walked into the cave Toothless and she had found. Going inside followed by Toothless she sat down. Toothless shot a blast at the fire pit she had made and settled down behind her, letting his body keep her warm. With that she decided to take a nap.

An hour later she got up and exited the cave. Pulling out her spy glass she checked out the palace. She smiled as she noticed the procession of people coming up the mountain trail. The front entrance of the palace was the only way to get in. All the other sides of the compound were surrounded by nothing but cliffs and a sheer vertical

drop. This was probably the main reasons she could pull this off. With a sigh she sat down and waited for the sun to go down. To pass the time she closed her eyes and began to mediate, crossing her legs, focusing on her breathing, and letting her mind clear. Toothless came and sat down next to her. He closed his eyes and began to meditate as well.

When the sun finally set, Hicca opened her eyes and stood up. Stretching, she steeled herself. It was time to infiltrate. Turning to Toothless, she locked eyes with him, letting him know it was time. Toothless held her gaze and understood. Then he crouched low for her to get on. She mounted and gave him the go ahead. Toothless leapt from the cliff and gained altitude. Climbing above the palace he circled as Hicca looked for a place to land. Finally she settled on the tallest pagoda in the compound. Hovering ten feet above it, Hicca began adjusting the tailfin, before pulling the lever to lock it open. Then she grabbed her bow and quiver of arrows before rolling off the side of Toothless's saddle. Twisting her body she landed in a crouch, barely making a sound. Then she looked up at Toothless and pointed off in the direction of their campsite. Toothless nodded and headed off.

Hicca watched him go and thanked the gods she had him. No one could see him at night and it made infiltration much easier for her. She decided that the top of the pagoda would be a good place as any to hide. No one would suspected someone coming in from the sky after all. Making herself comfortable, she crossed her legs and mediated some more as she waited for the sun to rise.

* * *

><p>After a few hours, the sun began to rise over the mountains. Hicca pulled up her mask to cover her nose and mouth and got ready. With the remaining twilight she had left, Hicca descended the pagoda. Coming onto the second level of the pagoda, Hicca leapt onto the roof of a nearby building. Focusing on her hearing, she could make out the voices of various people. She heard boiling water, the clanging of pots and pans, and the jingle of weapons and armor though the walls. Crouching low she made her way along the top of the building. Coming to a fork, she follows her internal map to the left.<p>

As she ran along, she counted the distance in her head as best she could. Once she reached approximately two hundred feet she stopped and looked over the side of the section of the building she is currently on. Then she looked around and listened, pushing her hearing to its limits. When she heard no one, she silently dropped down and backed up before stepping onto the hardwood floor of the compounds. Sliding open the door in front of her she stepped inside and shut the door behind her. Immediately she dropped to the floor and began to lift up the mats. One by one she checked under each mat. As she was about to move a rug out of the way, she heard the noise of someone approaching. She heard someone who was definitely covered in armor and she could hear the jangle of steel. She heard his footsteps getting nearer and nearer. Finally when they were outside the door Hicca crouched low and leapt up as high as she could. Leaping to the level of the ceiling, she spread out her arms and held herself between the rafters and waited.

Then a man entered. Sliding open the door he came in and looked around. She wondered if she had possibly heard her. She thought she

had been silent. She watched tensely as the man continued to search for something. If she had to she could drop down silently behind him and slit his throat. But she wanted to avoid as much death as she could. Plus, it would waste time having to hide the body. Finally the man seemed to find what we was looking for. A bottle of sake. He smiled in delight before leaving the room. Hicca sighed in relief before dropping down. Moving the rug out of the way she lifts of the mat under it. She smiled at finally finding what she was looking for. A hidden door, leading to a hidden tunnel that extended all over the compound. Opening the door with a slight creak she positions herself partway in the hole. Closing the door slightly she replaced the mat before letting the door fall.

It takes moment for her eyes to adjust to the darkness, but she is a ninja. They all have excellent vision in the dark. Making her way through the tunnel she keeps her hand along the wall as she counts he distance. Going fifty feet north, she takes a sharp left turn. Then within 100 feet she takes a right. Then a right and a left. Finally she reached a dead end. She smiled in victor at having followed her internal map correctly. At the end of the tunnel there is a ladder leading up to another door. She just hoped nothing heavy is on top of it. She had a backup plan if there is anyway. Climbing the ladder she reaches an arm out and rest it on the door above her. Taking a breath she pushed. The door didn't budge. Taking another breath she pushed again, with more force. Slowly but surely the door gave and she slowly opened it a crack. She peeked out from beneath the door and into the empty food storage cellar. She listened intently before opening the door just enough for her to squeeze out. Then she gently shut the door. The cellar is much closer to the main courtyard. Taking the secret tunnel was much safer than making her way out in the open.

Suddenly she heard the noise of someone coming down the steps to the cellar. Ducking behind some barrels, she melted into the shadows and waited. She then saw a young woman enter. She looked around the room before grabbing a sack full of rice and hefting it into her arms. Then she turned around and made her way up the stairs. Peeking her head out of the cellar entrance she saw that it is located in a courtyard. She looked ahead of her and saw the guard towers. They were built on a stone foundation. On top is a wooden roofed structure held up by columns of wood. With the little low light she had left she dashed to the base of the tower. Reaching into her back pouch, pulled out her hand claws. Slipping them on she dug them into some cracks between the stone and began to scale the wall. She went at a slow pace. Trying her best not to make too much sound. Coming to the end of the stone section she peaked over the side and saw some guards looking out from the other side into the inner courtyard. They seemed to be talking to each other and weren't paying too much attention to their surroundings. Using the opportunity, Hicca climbed higher, grabbing onto the one of the wooden pillars holding the roof and shimmying up it. Reaching the roof she reached out and grabbed onto the edge with one hand. Then she grabbed on the other hand, letting her body dangle over the side. Then swinging her body, she swung it over the edge and onto the roof. Putting away her hand claws, she stayed low and went over to the other side and looked down into the courtyard.

It was empty. It was being prepared for a show to entertain the Shogun. Staying low, Hicca sat down and waited. She noticed that there were poles sticking out of the ground all over the courtyard

with ropes running between them where paper lanterns were hung. They were probably used to light the courtyard at night.

After a few hours had passed and it was midday and people had started to prepare for the Shogun's entertainment. Then the samurai of the Northern Province started to file out of the complex. They surrounded the courtyard on all sides. Hicca gave an internal groan. Escape wasn't going to be easy. Then the samurai of the Shogun filed out, lining up behind the other group of samurai. The samurai remained standing as the doors on the other side of the courtyard opened and the Shogun walked out. Hicca could tell it was him by his extremely elegant attire. Behind him to his right was the Shogun's son. To the left was the lord of the Northern Province, indicated by the color of his robes matching the color of his samurais' armor. Stepping forward, they waited as some servants came out and set down some mats for them to lower themselves onto. Standing behind the two lines of samurai were servants and merchants who had been allowed to enter and watch the show.

The nobles sat down and waited for the entertainment to begin. Soon enough, two samurai stepped forward from the throng of men. They bowed to each other and then drew their swords. One was a samurai of the northern lord and one was one of the Shogun's men. A little exhibition duel to show off the skills of their men obviously. Hicca had a clear shot from here. The men's samurai and the lords' attention was solely focused on the match. Hicca grabbed her bow from off her back. Steadying her nerves she drew a black arrow from her quiver and notched it.

Taking a breath she pulled back on the drawstring as far as it would go. And then to her shock, the bowstring snapped. She gaped at her now useless bow in shock. There was no way it could have broken. She had checked the bow and replaced the string the night before she had left. How could this have happened? She racked her brain as she tried to think of a reason her bow could have broken. Then it struck her. "Daigo," she whispered lowly with hate. He had sabotaged her bow. Why else would he have been in the armory? And that smile, it was fake, he had wished her luck out of spite. She cursed silently. She had thought his suddenly friendly behavior had been wierd. She had to think of another plan. But going down there was suicide. She couldn't fight her way through all those samurai. And she couldn't throw a shuriken, kunai, or use her blowgun without getting significantly closer, and risk being spotted. And the condition of the mission being to murder him in public meant that killing him in his sleep was off the table.

Tapping her chin in thought, she was struck with inspiration. She had come up with an idea. A stupid idea. An absolutely, ludicrously, ridiculously, crazy idea. The samurai had bows. If she could get one, she could still complete her mission. She watched as the two samurais' match had ended. They bowed to each other before stepping back into the line of men. Then two more men stepped forth and prepared to spar. Going to the other side of the roof, Hicca looked out over the edge and under the wooden structure. One of the samurai had a bow on his back. There were three of them. Taking a breath she swung over the ledge and into the wooded structure.

Touching down silently on the wooden floor, she drew her kunai. She was going to have to kill the man in the center. Taking a breath she crept forward. Coming up directly behind the man, she quickly threw

her left hand over his mouth and dragged her kunai across his throat. He gurgled helplessly before dying and going limp. She quickly jumped back as the two men saw their comrade fall out of the corner of their eyes and turned around and spotted her. They gave a shout of surprise before drawing their katana. Hicca was going to have to fight these two.

Putting away her kunai, she drew her Ninjato and prepared herself. The samurai stepped two the sides of her, and circled her slowly. Hicca turned slowly as well, keeping both of the men in her line of sight. Then they both quickly raised their swords above their heads before slashing down vertically with the intent to kill her. Hicca had predicted this, raising her Ninjato above her head, she stopped both blade with her own. With a shove, she pushed both blades off of her, making both men stumble back slightly, surprised by her strength. Hicca was a lot stronger than her tiny body let on. Years of intense physical training made sure of that. Then quickly she stepped to her right and slashed her blade across the man's throat, before delivering a swift but powerful kick to the man's torso, making him fall over and die. With that man dead she focused her attention on the other man.

Hearing the whistle of his blade arcing toward her, she ducked right as the blade was going to decapitate her. Turning to face the man she crouched low and waited for his next attack. She watched him as he held his blade out in front of him. Watching him closely, she saw his body tense as he prepared to strike again. He swung his sword from the right and Hicca raised her right arm, blocking the blade with her dragon claw. Then she swung her foot up into the man's groin. The man dropped his sword in pain before falling to his knees cradling his groin. With that, Hicca delivered a roundhouse kick across the man's jaw, knocking him out. Behind her, Hicca heard footsteps. Reaching into her shuriken pouch she drew one and threw it, hitting the approaching man in the neck. From both sides of the tower, samurai were approaching, obviously having heard the struggle. Hicca had to end this now. Sheathing her Ninjato she dashed towards the dead man's body and scooped up the bow before leaping out of the guard tower.

Foot extended, she landed on the top of one of the poles scattered throughout the courtyard. Then she leapt again to the next one, getting as close to the Shogun as possible. The samurai below her saw her and they were preparing to shoot her down. Quickly she drew an arrow and notched it before pulling it back and aiming. There was a lone samurai standing in front of Shogun. Taking aim she pulled back on the drawstring and fired, hitting the man in the eye and killing him instantly, and making him collapse. Leaping to the next pole, Hicca balanced on one leg and dodged an arrow as it flew past her head. Then she drew an arrow from her quiver. With no one standing in front of the Shogun, she had a clear shot. All around, samurai were running to shield him with their bodies.

But they weren't going to make it in time. Pulling back on the drawstring she aimed for the Shogun's heart and fired. The Shogun was too surprised to react. He couldn't move as the arrow sailed through the air and pierced his chest. It punched through his sternum before stabbing him in the heart. He looked down at the arrow sticking out of his chest in surprise. He coughed up blood as his whole body suddenly went cold. The world slowly became blurry as the poison coating the arrow tip rushed through his veins as well. With final

cough of blood everything went black and he died. Beside him, his son cried out in anguish.

Hicca stood there for a moment with her adrenaline rushing through her veins. She had done it. She had completed the mission. She had assassinated the Shogun. Her celebration was cut short as suddenly the pole she was standing on collapsed as a samurai sliced through it. She fell, landing in a crouch and took in her situation. She was surrounded. Almost all the samurai had their weapons drawn. The Shogun's son was crying out for her death. The samurai encircled her with spears and swords pointed at her.

"Uhmâ€¦good morning," she said with a nervous chuckle while strapping the bow to her back. Slowly she reached behind her. The men caught her movement and shouted at her in warning, saying they would kill her if she tried anything. Knowing she would be killed anyway, Hicca quickly reached behind her and grabbed several purple orbs from her pouch. At her sudden movement they advanced on her, preparing to cut her down. Hicca quickly threw the orbs down. The smoke bombs exploded, covering her in a thick cloud of smoke that spread and covered the men as well.

The men all slashed and stabbed at the place where the ninja had just been standing. When their weapons didn't collide with anything they pause in confusion. Looking through the smoke, they saw that the ninja had disappeared. As they kept looking through the smoke they shouted to each other to try and locate her. Only when the smoke cleared did one of the men in the back call out. Turning around they saw the retreating form of the ninja. With a shout they started after her, determined not to let her get away.

Ahead of the bloodthirsty samurai, Hicca was running for her life. "So much easier if this had been at night," she muttered to herself as she ran. If it had been nighttime, she could have ducked into some shadows and waited the samurai out. Reaching behind her she pulled out a vial containing a special liquid. Splashing it on herself, she put it away and kept running.

She ran straight for the cellar and down the stairs. Quick as she could, she ran to the door on the floor with the secret tunnel. Opening it she leapt down before slamming it shut. She quickly made her way through the tunnel, based completely on memory. Coming to the place where she entered, she heard the shouts of the samurai echoing through the tunnel. She quickly scaled the ladder and flung the door open. She leapt out of the tunnel and slammed the door shut. Running out the door behind her, she heard the shout of the samurai in the distance. Running into the courtyard in front of her, she then saw a group of samurai approaching. Leading the charge was the Shogun's son, crying out for blood.

Hicca quickly dashed to her right, sprinting at full speed. Ahead of her, a servant stepped into the courtyard, wondering what the shouting was about. "MOVE IT!" Hicca shouted to her. When the servant heard her, she turned her head and screamed in panic. In fear she dropped to her knees and curled in on herself. Hicca rolled her eyes but decided to make use of the situation. Speeding up, she used the girls back as a step to leap up and grab onto the edge of the roof. She pulled herself onto it before tearing off away from the voices of the approaching mob. They hurled spears and shot arrow at her. She leapt, ducked, rolled, and blocked every projectile sent

toward her.

The situation growing dire as she was running out places to run, she scanned the skies. Her heart soared as she saw a black dot in the distance, approaching fast. Leaping to her left into a courtyard, she hit the ground and rolled with the impact to disperse the force. Quickly getting to her feet, she made final sprint toward the stone wall straight ahead of her. This wall had nothing behind it but a sheer drop to one's death. Unless you could fly, you were a dead man. Running into a corner, she used the corner to push herself up and onto the top of the wall and turned to look down at the samurai.

The samurai all stopped. Confused as to why the ninja would corner herself. She had nowhere to go now. They kept their weapons at the ready. They shouted at her to step down or die. To their surprise the ninja seemed completely calm. Then she waved at them before she turned and leapt off the wall. A collective gasp escaped all the samurais' mouths as they tried to comprehend what had just happened. The ninja had just leapt to her death.

Then something unbelievable happened. A black blur suddenly shot up from behind the wall, startling the men. They all leapt back in surprise as they tried to make out what it was. Then realization set in. A black dragon. It hovered above them with a snarl on its face. Suddenly from its mouth came a flash of purple light. It collided with the ground just in front of the men and exploded. They cried out in fear and reeled back, staring at the beast in awe.

"Let it be known that even the Shogun is not untouchable,"* came a shout. In surprise, the samurai squinted up at the dragon and their mouths dropped open as they saw the ninja sitting atop it. She glared down at them, with fierceness in her eyes. "Neither are the samurai nor the lords of the provinces. And you,"*she paused to point at the Shogun's son. "Should you steer from the righteous path, the clan of the Black Dragon will be there to end you,"* she said coldly in warning. The beast roared to emphasize her point.

With that, the dragon flapped its wings harder before soaring away. Leaving the samurai and the Shogun's son trembling. They had heard the rumor of the beast a clan of ninjas had at their beck and call. But to actually see it was a terrifying experience. What's more, they promised to kill him if he became like his father. That day, the Shogun's son swore to follow the righteous path he believed in. He swore he wouldn't turn a blind eye to the misuse of status and power of his thralls.

Lest he see the black beast that was sure to haunt his nightmares for the rest of his life.

* * *

><p>Soaring away from the palace, Hicca was in a sour mood despite her success. Crooning in concern, Toothless turned his head to look back at her.<p>

"I'm fine bud," she said giving him a small smile. That's all she said as she directed her gaze ahead of them with a scowl on her face. Toothless didn't press the issue and just focused on flying steadily. Her thoughts were about Daigo. He always knew he hated her. But to sabotage her bow. Jeopardize her mission. That was going too

far.

I'm gonna kill you Daigo, she swore to herself.

* * *

><p>Daigo you bastard! Hop you liked. Feel free to comment and leave suggestions

6. Chapter 6

Settling the Score

Reaching the mountain and coming through the waterfall entrance, Hicca dismounted Toothless and walked with purpose through the tunnels of the hideout. Toothless could sense the anger coming off his rider and followed behind closely. He had never seen her this angry before, it really had him surprised. He wasn't sure what he should do.

Inside Hicca's head, her thoughts were focused solely on how she was going to end Daigo. She would never understand why he hated her. Frankly, she didn't much care anymore. With her skills at high level and her confidence to match, he could say anything he wanted. If he wanted to the hate her for his petty reasons, then so be it. But to sabotage her. Endanger her life. That was unforgivable. Daigo needed to get what was coming to him. It was time for Hicca and him to settle this stupid grudge. This had been a long time coming.

Reaching the living quarters of the base, the clan members called out to her. They cheered as she passed by open doors, elated by her return and assuming she had succeeded. But Hicca didn't care right now. It occurred to her that she didn't know where Daigo was. He could be out on a mission for all she knew. At hearing a shout from a nearby clan member, she turned to face them and stalked forward. She was coming up on a young girl. The girl had a terrified expression on her face at seeing the malice in Hicca's eyes. Normally Hicca would feel bad for scaring the girl, but she was too angry to care.

"Where's Daigo?" She demanded harshly.

The girl looked to be on the verge of tears at her tone. "He's in the training room," she squeaked out, trembling in fear.

With that, Hicca nodded and went on her way, leaving the girl to sigh in relief as she left. In an attempt to apologize for his rider's behavior, Toothless licked the girl lightly on the cheek, earning a small giggle. Toothless smiled at her before continuing after Hicca.

Hicca made her way to the training room. Her temper growing and her fingers twitching to hit something, preferably Daigo. Reaching the doors of the training room, she flung the door open harshly and entered. Looking around, she spotted Daigo sparring with another clan member. She grit her teeth in anger, balling her fists at her side she stalked forward, making a beeline straight for him.

Out of the corner of her eyes she saw Mayumi. She heard her sister call out to her, but she ignored her. Finally reaching the sparring ring, Daigo's back was to her. On the other side of him, his opponent suddenly straightened and looked passed Daigo and at her.

Daigo was confused as to why his sparring partner suddenly dropped his battle stance. As he was about to ask him what was wrong a strong hand gripped him on his left shoulder. Then he was spun around to come face to face with the sight of a very angry Hicca.

Before he could react Hicca cocked back her right arm and punched Daigo across the face. The force caused him to stumble to the left and he brought his right hand up to rub his jaw. Hicca didn't give him the chance to massage his jaw as she kicked him in the chest, making him stumble back. Hicca took a step forward and then attempted to chop Daigo in the neck with her left hand on his right side. But Daigo had finally recovered from his shock and blocked with his right hand.

"I'm gonna kill you Daigo," Hicca snarled. Then spinning on her left heel, she tried to kick Daigo across his jaw. But he stepped back dodging the strike. With a growl Hicca advanced on him and started throwing a flurry of punches and kicks. Daigo did the same. They were now fully engaged in a fight as they threw limbs and struck out at each other. To fight a fellow ninja was very frustrating. Ninja used not only punches and kicks, but crippling nerve strikes, and painful grapple holds when fighting an opponent. But another ninja knew to protect their joints and guard their vulnerable nerves. Both Daigo and Hicca stumble backwards and away from each other as they both simultaneously threw a punch that connected with each other's face in the same instance.

Locking eyes, Daigo wiped some blood away from his nose as Hicca wiped at a gob of blood at the corner of her mouth. All around them the other clan members were unsure of what to do. They didn't know if they should let them fight it out or stop them. Toothless watched from the crowd, as confused and as worried about his rider as the other clan members.

Glaring daggers at each other, Hicca and Daigo charged. They both cocked back the fist as they prepared to lash out at each other once again. As they were about to close the distance and clash a black blur suddenly stepped between them.

It was Sensei Shou. Spreading his legs, he crouched low and crossed his arms in front of him. Then he threw his arms to his sides, striking both Daigo and Hicca in the chest with enough force to send them both flying backwards.

Knocked off her feet and flying Hicca was suddenly caught in the strong, firm hands of another clan member. Glancing over her shoulder, she saw it was Mayumi. Looking forward and past Sensei Shou, she saw Daigo being held by other clan members as well. Overcoming her surprise by Sensei Shou's sudden appearance, Hicca made a move to charge at Daigo, but was held back by Mayumi. Hicca thrashed wildly in her sister's grip, trying to frantically escape and finish off Daigo.

Mayumi was surprised at her sister's actions. She had never seen Hicca so angry before. And now, she was actually struggling to

restrain her as Hicca flailed about violently in her grip.

"Let me go!" Hicca snarled. "I'm going to kill that bastard!"

"*ENOUGH!*" Sensei Shou said loudly. His voice was firm and cut through the murmur of the crowd. The whole room was now completely silent. Even Hicca had stopped her violent cursing and ceased her struggle. Glancing between Daigo and Hicca, the older man massaged his temples with one hand. "*Who started this?*" He asked, addressing the whole room.

"*She did Sensei. She just attacked me for no reason,*" Daigo spat out.

"*Because you sabotaged my bow you bastard!*" Hicca shouted. "*I've always known you hated me, but that's low even for you!*" She cried in outrage.

Before Daigo could shout back and start a yelling match, Sensei Shou interrupted. "*Stop!*" He then turned to Hicca. "*Hicca, how was your mission? And what do you mean sabotaged your bow?*" He asked in concern.

Hicca finally freed herself from Mayumi's hold and stood up as straight as she could. "*Mission accomplished Sensei. The Shogun is dead,*" Hicca answered firmly. At her words, a murmur went through the crowd. They were stunned and thrilled at her success. Waiting for the crowd to quiet down, she spoke when they did, "*And while on my mission, my bow's string snapped. I was forced to improvise and steal a samurai's bow in order to complete my objective,*" she explained.

"*And you believe Daigo did this?*" Sensei Shou asked seriously.

"*I checked my bow thoroughly before the mission. Plus, I replaced the bowstring the day before I left. There no way it could have broken,*" she said while glaring over at Daigo. He glared back at her and she continued, "*As I went to grab my bow from the armory, Daigo happened to be leaving. I thought nothing of it at first, but now I see that he was acting out of character. I believe he sabotaged my bow out of spite.*"

A murmur went through the crowd once more. Everyone was aware of the animosity between Daigo and Hicca. But would he really do that? Sabotaging a clan member was a serious offense, and it was downright low. Sensei Shou raised a hand to silence the crowd before turning to Daigo, "*Daigo, what do you have to say of these accusations?*"

"*They are false and untrue,*" Daigo spat. "*She obviously just got unlucky or forgot to replace the string and just wants someone to blame,*" he said with a snarl.

No one could detect deceit in Daigo's answer. But that didn't mean he wasn't lying. He was a ninja, they all were. Deception was a powerful weapon to the ninja. One had to be good liar in case one was discovered while on a mission.

With a nod Sensei Shou turned to address Hicca once more. "*Hicca, do

you have any evidence that Daigo did in fact sabotage your bow?"* At his question Hicca remained silent. He took that as an answer. *"Then we cannot rule out the possibility that it was just an unfortunate stroke of bad luck,"* he finished. Watching Hicca's face fall, he attempted to brighten her mood, *"However, I commend you on your quick thinking. A samurai's bow will make an excellent trophy,"* he said, earning a small smile from Hicca. *"Congratulations Hicca, you have earned your freedom,"* he added, referring to the terms of their deal. Hicca looked up and gave a firm nod.

Another murmur went through the crowd as they tried to comprehend what Sensei Shou had meant. What did he mean she earned her freedom? Sensei Shou silenced them once again before elaborating, *"Everyone, the universe had determined that Hicca's fate lies elsewhere. Given all she has done to return our clan to its former glory and her success at killing the Shogun, I have decided to let Hicca leave the clan,"* he explained. At that a collective gasp went through the crowd. Hicca was leaving?

Hicca smiled gratefully at Sensei Shou. The way he phrased it made it sound less like she was abandoning them. She was still upset with Daigo, and she hated that he wasn't going to be punished, but she could at least live with the fact that she had completed her mission. She had done it. She had earned her freedom. She could go home.

"However," Sensei Shou suddenly said cutting through the crowd's whispering. When they were silent he glanced between Hicca and Daigo before speaking, *"I think it is about time you two settled this,"* he said. Seeing both young people raise an eyebrow in question, he explained, *"A duel. Before Hicca leaves. Let us put this grudge to rest. What say you?"* He asked, looking to them both.

Hicca and Daigo locked eyes with each other, sizing the other up. Hicca had never fought Daigo before just a few moments ago. While there was no doubt he was a good fighter, they seemed about even from her assessment. Hicca nodded in confirmation. It was time to put Daigo in his place.

Diago glared at Hicca. He had always hated her. The two had never fought until now, but Daigo was confident he could destroy her. And Mayumi couldn't butt in and retaliate. He would humiliate her before she left. *_Let her leave in shame_* he thought with a sneer. With that, he nodded.

"Then follow me," Sensei Shou said walking out of the training room. Hicca and Daigo obeyed and followed after him. The rest of the clan members followed in tow, including Toothless. They glanced at each other out of the corner of their eyes.

They were going to end this.

_*I'm gonna crush you,* _they both thought simultaneously in their heads.

* * *

><p>The entire clan remained silent as they followed Sensei Shou as he led them to the deepest part of the hideout. All the while, Hicca and Daigo were psyching themselves out for their upcoming duel. Both

of them were determined to win. Finally after what seemed like hours of walking, they came to a large iron door. Stepping forward, Sensei Shou grabbed the iron rings functioning as handles and pulled the door open. It gave a loud screech of protest, indicating that the door hadn't been opened in some time. When it was fully opened, Hicca saw that it was pitch black inside.<p>

Taking a torch of the wall, Sensei shouted at a few other clan members to do the same, and they complied. Then they entered. The inside of this chamber was dank and musty. Hicca couldn't make out any natural source of light coming in. Ahead she noticed there was a sheer drop. Sensei Shou stopped at the edge of this drop and waited for them to join him. Coming up beside him, Hicca gasped at what she looked down at. It was a large rectangular pit. It looked like it was the remnants of an old training room.

"This is an old section of the hideout," Sensei Shou explained, having sensed her thoughts. "It was once the old training room. Then an earthquake caused the chamber to become unstable so we abandoned it. Now we only use it for settling disputed through combat," he explained.

Hicca listened to his words with fascination. In the pit were large rocks that had probably fallen from the ceiling. They covered the pit and some even extended out of it. She could see why this would make a good place for ninja to duel. It was dark and there were many shadows to hide in. Not only was this a test of a ninja's fighting ability, but it also tested his ability to hide.

"You may take in one weapon," began Sensei Shou, explain the terms of the duel. Looking to Daigo he asked, "What weapon will you choose?"

Daigo locked eyes with his Sensei before glancing at Hicca. "Katana," he said while reaching up and brushing his hand against the handle of the sword on his back.

"And you Hicca?" He asked.

"Kusarigama," she said firmly.

With that, Sensei Shou nodded and point to torches at each corner of the top of the pit. The other clan members understood and went to go light them. The light from the torches barely did anything to pierce the blackness, but Hicca was glad to have them. Then Sensei Shou spoke up once more, "This will be a duel to settle any past and future grudges. The winner of this duel will be the one who makes the other surrender. Additionally, if you manage to draw first blood, you win," he explained. When both Hicca and Daigo nodded he continued, "This is to be a friendly duel. You are to not kill each other if it can be avoided," he added firmly.

Hicca saw Daigo smirk evilly at hearing the last part. This meant he could potentially kill her. In the middle of a battle you couldn't always be careful. He could land a fatal blow and claim it was an accident.

"I will allow the use of your dragon claws Hicca, but you are not to activate the firing mechanism," he added. Hicca nodded in understanding. "However, any other special modifications to

weapons will be allowed,"* he said with a small smile. At this, Hicca smiled, making Daigo a tad bit nervous. * "Now that the rules have been stated you may enter,"* he said while gesturing with his hands to a set of stairs carved into the side of the pit and leading down. At this, they both nodded before Daigo took the lead and started making his way down the stairs.

As Hicca was about to follow him she felt a nudge from behind. Turning around, she was met with the acid green eyes of her dragon. They were wide with worry. After he gave a concerned croon, Hicca smile reassuringly and rubbed his head, "I'll be fine hun'. But this has been a long time coming." At her words, Toothless nodded and growled lightly, wishing her luck.

Then Mayumi stepped forth. "Go get him sis," he said with a proud smile. Hicca gave her a nod before descending down the stair herself.

When she reached the bottom of the pit she made her way to stand a few feet across from Daigo, who had been standing the center waiting for her. The other clan members watched in anticipation and excitement. Most wished Hicca luck, but many believed Daigo would win. He had more experience and had been a Jonin longer after all.

* "Prepare yourselves!" came the command of Sensei Shou from above. At his word, Daigo drew the sword on his back while Hicca reached into her back pouch and pulled out her Kusarigama.

Daigo placed both his hands on the hilt of his sword firmly and held it in front of him. Staring at Hicca in anticipation.

Hicca grasped the handle of the sickle firmly in her right hand. With her left, she held the length of chain, giving enough slack as to allow the weight at the end to swing freely. She glared at Daigo, her heart pounding in excitement.

* "Ready?!*" Sensei Shou shouted.

"HAI!" they both called out in confirmation.

* "BEGIN!*" Sensei Shou cried.

* * *

><p>Slowly Daigo and Hicca circled each other. They were sizing each other up, waiting for the other to strike first. Hicca was going over the options in her head. Engaging Daigo in close combat was risky. He had the superior weapon for that. With her Kusarigama however, she could attack from mid-range and close range. She decided that mid-range would be the better option. With that, she began to spin the end of the chain attached to the small weight to her side. Daigo took notice of this and stopped, waiting for her attack. Spinning the chain until it reached a decent speed she brought it over her head before lashing out at Daigo.<p>

Daigo anticipated her attack and jumped back to avoid the chain. He watched as Hicca pulled the chain back to her and began to swing it in a circle above her head. He continued to wait as Hicca continued to swing it around, first to the right, then to the left, then back

over her head, all in attempt to get him confused by the quick movement. Then Hicca lashed out again with the chain, coming at incredible speed, Daigo ducked as it arced through the place his upper body had been. He watched as Hicca spun on her heel and dropped down slightly bringing the chain back around and aiming for his legs. Daigo jumped over the chain. Hicca could keep him at a distance with that damned thing. He had to get in close if he was going to win. He waited as Hicca swung the end of the chain at him again. Dodging, he charged forward as Hicca was yanking it back in. With her pulling it back, she couldn't lash out at him with it.

Hicca saw Daigo charging as she pulled the chain back to her. She cursed silently as she prepared to block his blow with her sickle. As Daigo swung his blade at her right side, she intercepted it with her sickle. Daigo pushed forward with his sword, his superior strength allowing him to push it near her face. Having reeled the chain back Hicca used her other hand to try and push Daigo back. Looming over her and practically in her face, Hicca could see the malice in his eyes. Hicca just glared back with equal intensity and grit her teeth. With a grunt in effort she managed to push Daigo back enough to kick him in the chest, making him stumble back. As he was recovering though, she lashed out with her chain and wrapped it around his right leg. Daigo looked down in surprise and back up to her. With a smile, Hicca tugged with all her strength, pulling Daigo off his feet and sending him tumbling through the air and making him land face first on the floor. She heard him groan as he attempted to recover. She ran towards him and swiftly kicked him in the side forcing him to roll over. As she was preparing to slice at him with her sickle to end the duel, Daigo swept her legs out from under, sending her flat on her back.

Daigo immediately leapt to his feet as Hicca went down. Then he quickly raised his sword to slash at her on the ground, not caring if the blow was fatal or not. Hicca seeing this coming, quickly rolled backward and using her hands pushed herself up onto her feet. Having to use her hands to flip herself up had left her weaponless however. Daigo saw this and immediately stood in front of her weapon, now laying on the floor. Hicca cursed silently and got into a battle stance. Her dragon claws were about to fulfill their purpose. Seeing her at a disadvantage, Daigo rushed forward and began to swing wildly at her. Metal clanged against metal as Hicca used her claws to block, push, and swipe Daigo's blade away. As it stood Hicca could only defend herself in this situation. Blocking a slash, Hicca jumped back and did a couple backflips to get some breathing room. Hicca thought of what she could do to turn the situation around. She had to get to her weapon. Quickly she formulated a plan. It was a stretch, but it could work. Whirling around, she ran to a small section of the ring that was completely covered in darkness. A large slab of rock laying across the ring and under it was a dark spot that contained many smaller pieces of the rock that had fallen off and crashed into the ring.

Daigo watched Hicca run away. She was obviously desperate. She didn't have her weapon. With her dragon claws all she had done was keep from getting cut. Pressing the attack, he charged after Hicca. As Hicca reached the area completely covered in shadow, she vanished. Daigo knew she had taken advantage of the shadows and hidden. Entering the dark section, Daigo looked around and listened intently. Normally he was at the complete advantage with an opponent in the dark. His finely tuned hearing could detect even the subtlest movements and

even a heartbeat if he focused enough. But with another ninja, they could move as silently as he could. Meaning he may not hear them until the last minute, and he couldn't afford to focus too much or he might not be able to stop them when they attacked.

Hicca watched Daigo from the shadows. She was currently crouched behind a small round rock as she waited for her perfect moment. She knew Daigo would follow her. The man was too eager to attack. That would be his downfall. Honestly if he had just waited by her weapon, Hicca would have been forced to come out to try and get it. As Daigo searched back and forth for her, Hicca started to advance towards him slowly. Keeping her breathing under control and stepping lightly, she ducked from rock to rock every time he wasn't looking in her direction. Finally, she was within five feet of him. She was hiding behind a rock that was to his left, she had her back up against it as she waited for the perfect moment to initiate her plan. Finally when Daigo turned fully to the left, she flung a rock she had picked up behind her and over his head. It hit the ground in the distance and was heard. As she had hoped, Daigo started to advance toward it, thinking it was her. Another thing about Daigo, he underestimated her. He found it way too believable that Hicca would make such a mistake and make a sound that loud despite her training. Peeking out from behind her rock, she made out the form of Daigo's back. Sliding over the rock slowly, she started to creep towards him. She knew that once she got too close, Daigo would sense her, but that was what she was planning.

Finally when she was two feet behind him he stopped. Then he whirled around, swinging his blade and aiming at her right side. Hicca, anticipated this and stepped forward and raised her right arm to block. Blocking the blade and catching between two of the spikes, she lowered her arm, and thus lowered the blade as well. _Gotcha_, Hicca thought triumphantly. Before Daigo could free his blade and step away Hicca slammed the underside of her palm into Daigo's nose. Normally, she could do this with enough force to kill. But Hicca just made sure it hurt and dazed him. Then as he stepped back in pain, Hicca brought her leg up, catching him in the chin with her heel. It was hard enough to knock him off his feet and put him on his back. Using the opportunity Hicca whirled and ran to where she had dropped her weapon. Behind her, she heard Daigo swear before recovering and running after her. Hicca had a pretty good head start, but Daigo had a longer stride and was faster. Exiting the part of the ring covered in shadow, Hicca could barely make out the glint of metal coming from her weapon. She heard the footsteps of Daigo as he was closing in. _Gonna be close,_, Hicca thought to herself.

Finally within a couple feet of her weapon, Hicca heard Daigo give a grunt of exertion followed by sound of his blade whistling through the air at her. With a leap, she jumped out of the way of the blade and dived for her weapon. Grabbing it as she was rolling she took the sickle portion in her right hand the chain and weight portion with her left. Daigo, still charging prepared to strike Hicca from behind. Then he saw Hicca tense before turning around and swing the chain with the weight end at him. Daigo's still charging barely managed to stop and pull his head back in time as the weight passed a few centimeters in away from his face in a blur. Stopping and standing upright, he gripped his weapon securely as he waited for Hicca's next attack.

As Hicca fully turned around to face him and stood up straight she

seemed to be searching his face. Then to his surprise she smiled at him. Daigo furrowed his eyebrows in confusion. Did she think just because she got her weapon back she was going to win? Daigo continued to stare as Hicca's body relaxed and her smile seemed to be a triumphant one. What was going on in her head? Did she think she didn't have to defend herself against him? Was she just messing with his head? Then suddenly he froze as he felt a familiar sensation running down his right cheek. It was warm, reaching his left hand up he dabbed at the strange liquid and held it up to his face. Even in the dim light condition Daigo could tell what it was. It was dark, warm, and the scent was all too familiar. Blood. His blood. Something had cut him.

As she watched Daigo stare at his own blood in bewilderment, Hicca smiled to herself. Unbeknownst to Daigo, this had been her plan. Soon after Hicca joined the clan, she started to ask the clan members who made the weapons more about them. Always having had the knack for smithing, Hicca made all her own weapons. And many of them had special modifications. Hicca's Kusarigama for instance, was a personal favorite. For on the end of the chain that held the small round weight, there was a hidden surprise. On the bottom of the weight, directly opposite where the chain was attached, there was a little button. If that button was pressed down, a mechanism would activate that would cover the weight all around in spikes, turning the weight into a deadly spiked flail. The spikes weren't very long, but in this instance it had been all she had needed. Daigo had just barely managed to dodge the weight, but the tip of one of the spikes had just scratched his skin deep enough to draw blood.

"First blood Daigo. I win,"* Hicca declared victoriously.

Above her, members of the clan cheered out in victory. Mayumi breathed a sigh in relief and smiled proudly for her sister. Toothless was roaring happily at Hicca's victory.

All the while Daigo was fuming on the inside. He couldn't believe that he had been beaten. His hatred for Hicca skyrocketed to new heights. He realized she had tricked him. She had baited him into coming close enough for this to happen, having noticed the spike covering the weight on the end of her weapons chain. His face curled into a snarl as suddenly he saw nothing but red. With a guttural cry he lifted his sword up and charged Hicca, despite the protests of even his sensei. He was going to cut Hicca down, to hell with the damned contest. She wouldn't be better than him.

Hicca saw Daigo coming and dropped her weapon. Normally this would be a fool hardy move, but Hicca wasn't afraid. Taking a deep breath she crouched into a fighting stance and cleared her head. As Daigo got within striking range, Hicca activated her final gift from her years of training. Then just like that, the entire world slowed down as Hicca's adrenaline surged through her veins. This was the state of Junsui ni fÅ•kasu, or, 'pure focus', as her master had called it. A state that could only be attained by the highest level of ninja, through years of intense training. In the clan, she was one of three people who could achieve this state. The others being Mayumi and Sensei Shou. Like many things in Hicca's life, she had stumbled upon it accidentally in an intense sparring session with Mayumi. In this state all of Hicca's senses and physical abilities were pushed to the limits. It was a powerful but dangerous gift, as using it would leave her exhausted afterwards. It's why she hardly ever used it. In a

mission, it wasn't practical since she might have to make a strenuous getaway at any moment.

Focusing on Daigo, she formulated a counterattack. Analyzing his form, she predicted his attack. _Going to swing wildly. Defend with dragon claws against assault and wait for the right moment, _she thought. Then Daigo swung at her from the right, she raised the dragon claw on her right arm to block, letting it slide over the steel. Then he swung at her from the left and she raised her left claw up and did the same. Keeping her hands up, she blocked Daigo's mad slashes one by one, waiting for the chance. _He's slowing_, she realized as she watched him. _Prepare to counterattack_, she said readying herself. Finally, when she saw Daigo reach exhaustion as he came with a final slash from the right she seized the opportunity. Catching the blade in between the spikes on the sides of her claws, she slide her arm down it length, pointing it away from her as much as she could. Then she grabbed Daigo by his left forearm before pulling him close and head-butting him in the nose. After he stumbled back a step, she advanced, with a clockwise spin she slammed the back of her right closed fist across Daigo's face with enough force to daze him. Seeing him unsteady on his feet, Hicca threw a flurry of incredibly fast punches to his face. Striking him with open palms, fists, and even her elbows. Finally with a small jump she struck Daigo on his left side as she descended, making his legs buckle and forcing him to stab his sword into the ground at his right to keep himself from falling. Deciding to end the battle, she grabbed Daigo by the back of the head and slammed his forehead into the hilt of his own sword. Picking him up slightly she pulled the sword out of the ground before kicking the now kneeling Daigo in the chest with enough force to send him rolling backward away from her in a heap.

With that the battle was finally over. Panting heavily, Hicca staggered a little bit in exhaustion as the world returned to normal speed. Seeing Daigo on the floor and unconscious, Hicca couldn't hold back a rush of pride. Suddenly appearing to her right, Sensei Shou placed a hand on her shoulder, causing her to look up at him. He looked at her with a smile and a nod. Silently approving her handling of Daigo's attack. From above the clan members, Mayumi, and Toothless all cried out to her in congratulations and praise. She smiled up to them. With her victory, she had proven to herself that she had become strong. She was no longer the old Hicca who would take abuse. She would stand up for herself.

With a last smile, she allowed Sensei Shou to lead her out of the ring. They paused as he called out for clan members to take Daigo to the infirmary. A clear look of disappointment was written on his face. Hicca didn't dwell on what was going to happen to Daigo. She had won fair and square. With that she looked forward to her future in excitement and anticipation.

I'm going home.

* * *

><p>The next month and a half passed by too quickly for Hicca's taste. Word had spread of Hicca's success and the clan was once again the most feared and respected of all the clans. Requests from all over the land were pouring in, asking for the clan's assistance. Hicca smiled at knowing that she would be leaving the clan on a good note.<p>

The remaining time she spent with the clan, she prepared for her journey home. She packed supplies, built a new tailfin and saddle from scratch, and started forging spare parts in case she needed to repair or replace the saddle or fin altogether on the journey back.

Also, Mayumi took time away from missions so that they could spend it together. With Toothless, they flew all over the land. To beaches, hot springs, and they even hit some local celebrations. Even while having fun with Mayumi, Hicca's heart was torn at the thought of leaving her. She loved her sister a lot. She was truly going to miss her. But Mayumi wouldn't let her mope around, she was determined to make as many good memories as they could together.

She hadn't seen Diago at all since their duel. From what she heard, he was moved to a private section of the hideout to begin training to control his rage. Sensei Shou deeming him in need of more discipline. Supposedly he had also been demoted to Chunin. Hicca didn't let the thought of him bother her. She had won, he had lost, and then he had been out of line and attacked her. He deserved whatever he got.

The night before she was planning to leave, the clan threw a big party in her honor. Sushi, rice balls, and all kinds of her favorite food was served. She also played some games and danced with a few clan members and her sister. Toothless had a blast too, getting all the fish he could eat and stealing some of Hicca's sushi. Hicca went to bed feeling happy. These people really had become her family.

Finally the morning of her departure came. It was going to take about two months to get to Berk, it had only taken longer last time because she had stopped to explore. Checking to make sure she had everything, she saddled Toothless and made her way out of her room. The clan greeted her and Toothless in good morning before given them plenty of food. Someone had even gone through the trouble to prepare some rations for her and Toothless as she traveled. Hicca smiled at that and nearly cried. Finally finishing her meal, she got up made her way to the cliff where Mayumi and her usually spent time together. The entire clan followed her out with the exception of Daigo.

Pausing at the cliff's edge she took in the sunset, and the familiar view of the forest one last time. Not sure if or when she would see it again. Then she turned to look into the face of her Sensei. He smiled at her warmly and nodded. Hicca couldn't help but throw her arms around him in a hug. He had been like a father to her. He had given her the chance to be strong. He returned the hug before she pulled back and smiled up at him through watery eyes.

"I will miss you Hicca. You are one of my greatest students. And one of my precious children," he said fondly. With that, he patted her on the head and stepped back, giving her room to say goodbye to Mayumi.

At looking into the face of Mayumi, Hicca broke down. The damn burst and her whole body racked with sobs as she enveloped her sister in a hug. Mayumi smiled down at the girl, chin trembling and stroking her head lovingly. "There, there. It's ok," she whispered to her.

"I'm gonna miss you big sis," Hicca muttered against her sister

between sobs. Finally pulling back, she looked into her eyes and smiled at her.

Mayumi fought back tears and placed her hands on both of Hicca's cheek, while staring into her eyes with affection, "I'm going to miss you too little sister," she said honestly. Then she lowered Hicca's head and kissed her on top of her crown.

"I love you Mayumi Onee-chan," Hicca whispered quietly.

"I love you too Hicca," replied Mayumi honestly.

Hicca took a step back as Toothless came to nuzzle Mayumi affectionately. He would miss her too. She had helped his human so much, and taken care of her. She had helped Hicca heal from the scars on her heart and spirit in a way that he as a dragon never could. Pulling back he bowed to Sensei Shou in respect, lowering his chest and head to the ground. Then he got up and crouched low, crooning for Hicca to get on.

Hicca hesitated as she stared into the eyes of Mayumi. With a shaky breath she finally tore her eyes away before mounting Toothless. Taking one last look, she tried in earnest to memorize the face of everyone in the clan. She wouldn't forget them if she could help it. With one last look to Sensei Shou and Mayumi, she gave them her biggest smile before directing Toothless to take off. He complied, getting them airborne, he hovered and allowed Hicca one last look. Then he took off, heading in the direction of Berk that he knew by instinct. Hicca looked back over her shoulder one final time. There she saw the clan members calling out to her in farewell and waving. Hicca waved back and smiled to herself. All too soon they all disappeared from sight.

With a sad sigh, Hicca faced forward in the saddle to focus on flying. It had been a long six years. But her journey and stay in this land had been worthwhile. She had learned so much and come so far. She wondered if anyone would possibly recognize her if she simply showed up out of the blue. She then briefly wondered what she was going to do when she got back to Berk. But she shook that thought from her head as she decided to worry about it at a later time.

Smiling to herself, her heart began to thrum in excitement at the prospect of going home. Where there were dragons, Vikings, harsh winters, and lastly her father

But even so, she would never forget this land. The land where she learned to be strong. The land where she had become a shinobi. The land of the rising sun.

The land of Japan.

* * *

><p>Hope you liked. Hicca is now officially heading back to Berk. Thanks for the patience everyone. Hope this chapter was exciting for you. Also, the last fight scene sound familiar to anyone? Feel free to review and comment

7. Chapter 7

****Home Again****

It was the day of the annual celebration of Berk's peace with the dragons. All around the village, people were in high spirits. Children ran through the streets, playing with dragons. The adults were putting up decoration and jovially reminiscing about the day of old, when dragons were the enemy. The village was also buzzing in excitement about the dragon sky parade that the academy always did on this day and during Bork Week. Everyone murmured to themselves, wondering what Ash and his friends would come up with this year.

With a few hours of free time before Ash and his friends were supposed to do the parade, Ash had decided to have a meal with his parents. His spirits were pretty high, despite the tiny ache in his heart. This entire day reminded him of Hicca. How could it not, it was a celebration in her honor. Taking a bite from his fish he listened as his mother told him about how her search for a suitable wife was going.

"Oh sweetie I've found you the perfect woman," she said, beaming with pride.

"That's great mom," Ash responded, trying his best to sound interested.

"Yep I must had to pat myself on the back for this one. She's perfect. She's two years younger than you, a great cook, she can hunt, knows how to raise children, and she's even pretty skilled with a weapon dear. She also supposed to be a pretty young thing. Oh, and the good news is that she'll arrive sometime tomorrow. Isn't that great?" her mother added, positively giddy.

"Yes mom. She sound like quite the girl, I can't wait to meet her," he said giving her his best smile. He continued to half listen as his mother went on to explain how she had found this excellent marriage candidate. He was happy that she was happy. He decided then and there to try and really form an interest in this girl, at least to make his mother happy. Who knows, maybe this girl would finally make him forget about Hicca.

After finishing his meal Ash thanked his parents for the food before leaving. Stepping outside he smiled as he saw the village bustling about. Everyone was excited for the dragon parade and he hoped he and his friends had come up with something good. He decided to head to the dragon academy and take a flight with Stormfly. As he made his way there he stated thinking about all that was going on in his life.

Overall it was going ok. There was still the issue of Siver the Scarred. Berk had been attacked several times by small groups sent by him. Each time the group got a little bigger. Ash felt like Berk's defenses were being tested. Still, each time they had been able to repel the attacks without any injuries. But Ash couldn't help but wonder how large Siver's forces were. They hadn't yet heard any word from the other tribes about Siver's whereabouts. The man was staying well hidden. No matter, if or when Siver showed himself, Berk would be ready, they would win, Ash thought with determination.

Steering his thoughts from Siver, Ash thought about the girl he was supposed to meet. His mother had said she was pretty. Ash never really cared about women's looks. Not that he wasn't attracted to women, it was just that every time he found himself taking in a girl's appearance, he couldn't help but compare them to Hicca. Ash wondered what Hicca would look like now, if she was even still alive. Thinking back, Ash never really thought Hicca was ugly. Even though he hardly noticed her, he thought she was quite cute overall. He wondered if he and this girl he was supposed to meet would be a good match. What if they weren't? What if she hated dragons? Honestly that would be a deal breaker. Stormfly wouldn't be going anywhere for anyone. If it didn't work out with this girl would his mom just find another one? Would that be the woman he would marry? What if he didn't like this girl or any of the potential wives his mother found? Ash groaned and ran a hand through his hair as he wished that someone could just tell him what his future love would be like.

Ash stopped in his tracks as something occurred to him. Maybe someone could. Coming to a decision, Ash decided to put his flight with Stormfly on hold and headed for a different destination. Praying that he could find some answers to reassure his mind.

* * *

><p>Ash stood outside the door of the village elder. He had come to her because it was said that Gothi could read the runes and tell you your future. Normally Ash didn't believe in that stuff. He forged his own destiny with his own hands. But he figured he didn't have anything to lose.<p>

Reaching out with his hand slowly, he knocked on the door a few times before entering. Coming in side and shutting the door behind him, he saw Gothi standing with her staff in hand, with Gobber sitting on a stool and speaking to her.

Clearing his throat to get their attention, he spoke, "Elder Gothi, Gobber," he said acknowledging them both. When they turned to look at him he continued, "I hope I'm not interrupting anything."

"Not at all lad. Gothi was just giving me some ointment for my stumps," he said while lifting his prosthetic hand and foot. "Darn things really get bothered by the cold."

Ash nodded. Then he turned to meet the eyes of the elder. She was holding his gaze, waiting for him to say what he had come for. "Elder, if it not too much trouble, I was hoping you could read me my runes and tell me a little about my future," he said respectfully.

The elder raised an eyebrow inquisitively. "Never took you for the one to believe in that stuff lad," Gobber said echoing the elder's thoughts. "Anything to do with your mother trying to find you a wife?"

Ash shrugged lightly, "A little," he admitted.

Gothi seemed to accept his answer. Slowly she made her way to the back of her hut, hobbling slowly. Ash waited where he stood as he heard her rummage through various drawers. Then Gothi slowly made her

way back. In her hand there seemed to be various sticks and bones. Ash wondered what they were for. Gothi slowly made her way over to him. Stepping to the side, she put the thing in her hands on a low table. Then she looked up at Ash before looking down and beginning to scribble things in the dirt floor. Ash couldn't make heads or tails of the lines and other things she was drawing.

"You want a reading of you love line, right lad?" Gobber said, translating the scribbles.

Ash was grateful that Gobber happened to be here. He was one of the few people in the village who could translate Gothi's drawings. He mentally palmed himself for not thinking about this beforehand. Smiling at Gobber gratefully, he then turned to the elder and nodded. The elder nodded back before drawing in the ground again. Then she reached out and grabbed some of her sticks.

"Gothi's now going to uses the runes on the sticks to tell you a few things about your future love," Gobber explained.

Ash nodded in understanding before turning back to the elder and waiting. He watched as she slowly began to shake the sticks up and down in her hand. She continued to do this until one by one four sticks were shaken out from the rest. Placing the remaining sticks in her hands back on the table, she then picked up the ones on the ground. She looked over the marking on the sticks before placing them back with the others and drawing on the ground again. Ash watched curiously, wondering what the sticks had said.

"Oh you're quite lucky lad," Gobber said, elaborating. "The runes on the sticks say that your love will be strong, intelligent, beautiful, andâ€¦old?" Gobber said furrowing his eyebrows in confusion. The elder frowned and knocked him on the head with her staff. Rubbing his head and grimacing, Gobber took another look at the scribbles. "Oh, the last one was 'old love'."

Ash let out a sigh in relief. Hearing that his future love would be old made him think he was going to end up with an old lady or something. Then he raised an eyebrow at the final description "'Old love'? What does that mean?" he asked.

"It means someone you're been carrying a flame for," Gobber explained.

This only confused Ash more. The only person who would even closely fit that description would be Hicca. But, unless Hicca was suddenly going to appear out of thin air after six years, the last description sounded unlikely. He decided to ask the elder for more details, "Will this girl be from Berk?"

The elder considered his question for a moment. Then she turned and picked up the bones from the table. Gathering them up, she brought them close before tossing them to the ground lightly. The three Vikings watched as the bones fell to the floor. Then mysteriously, one bone hit the ground at the strangest angle, causing it to bounce from the floor and roll into a shadow at the corner of the room. Gothi raised an eyebrow at this before walking over to collect the bone. Brining it close to her face, she turned it over in her hand, examine it. Then she hobbled back over before setting it on the table and collecting the other. Setting those on the table as well, she

turned and began scribbling in the ground again.

"Hmmâ€¦|strange," Gobber muttered while stroking his beard.

"What strange?" Ash asked looking to Gobber.

"According to the bonesâ€¦|your love will be of darkness and shadows," Gobber said sounding unsure. He looked to Gothi, thinking that maybe he mistranslated. Gothi only held his gaze, her face indicating that he made no mistake. With that, he turned back to Ash and shrugged.

"What does that mean?" Ash asked. That description made no sense.

"Well, fortune telling isn't an exact science lad. Don't think too much of it," Gobber said unconcerned. Before Ash could press for more answers Gobber came over and slung an arm over his shoulder. "Come on now lad. The elder had things to do, let's talk about that parade you got planned this year," Gobber said with a smile. `

Ash relented, turning to Gothi, he nodded in thanks before letting Gobber lead him out of her hut. As Gobber talked about how excited he was to watch the parade and about the feast soft the celebration, Ash mulled over what the elder had predicted. The first three descriptions sounds like a pretty generic description of a Viking girl. The last one confused him. The prediction about her origins was even more confusing.

What in Odin's name does 'Of darkness and shadow mean'? He thought to himself.

* * *

><p>"WOOOOHOOOO!" Shouted an excited Hicca. Hicca and Toothless had been traveling towards Berk for about two months now. And the feeling of being back in Viking territory sang to her heart. She and Toothless had reentered Viking waters about a week ago, and the sight of other dragons let them know they were really home.<p>

Currently both were enjoying some flight antics as they flew close to the ocean's surface at blinding speed. Toothless moving so fast that it actually disturbed the water. Toothless let out an enthusiastic roar, echoing Hicca's upbeat mood. As much as he loved traveling with Hicca and exploring new lands, something about being back in the water of his birthplace, and flying the skies of his ancestors called out to his soul.

With an adjustment of the prosthetic Hicca made Toothless climb sharply. Toothless beat his wings steadily gaining altitude. Reaching the height of the clouds Hicca made him level out and do couple midair spins. Flying straight, she locked the prosthetic open before slipping her feet out of the stirrups. Crouching low on Toothless's back she said, "Race you hun'," before jumping off him and hurtling toward the ocean. Toothless watched her fall for a few seconds before diving after her.

Reaching her, he looked into her eyes and smiled at her with his tongue lolling out of his mouth. Hicca giggled at the thrill of their midair antics and her dragon's expression. Slowly she started to turn

in the airs and Toothless began to orbit around her. They both loved this feeling, the air rushing passed them, the adrenaline surging through them. This was freedom. This was their life. Approaching the ground fast, Toothless presented his back to her, allowing Hicca to grab on and reposition herself back in the saddle. Slipping her feet into the stirrups, she unlocked the tailfin before adjusting the prosthetic and pulling up. Toothless came out of the dive and skimmed over the water's surface. They both beamed in happiness. They would never get tired of this.

Looking around, Hicca started to see that they were getting very close to Berk. They flew over and passed familiar islands. Finally after another half an hour of flying, Hicca saw Berk in the distance. Toothless saw it too, he let out a happy roar before gaining speed. Hicca's heart beat madly in her chest as she was suddenly struck with nervousness.

"STOP HUN"!" She shouted. Toothless immediately slowed down before stopping to hover in midair. Turning his head to his rider, he looked at her in concern. He crooned inquisitively, confused by her sudden outburst. "Sorry hun'" she said while patting him on the head. "Let's just stop at another island first, and then we'll come during the night and I'll check it out." Toothless looked at her curiously. He searched her expression before huffing in reply. Flapping his wings he turned and steered them to a distant island.

Hicca hadn't thought about this part. What should she do? Just come out of the sky all willy nilly like she had never left. What would she say to everyone, to her father? _'Hey dad, sorry I've been gone for six years. I just took a little vacation in Japan and was trained by ninjas to kill people. Now what are we having for dinner?' _She thought with snort. Thinking back to the events of what happened before she had left, something occurred to her. Her father's order of exile still technically stood. She was still technically banished and no longer a member of the tribe. Even if her father could repeal his order, would he? Would he even want her? They were all still Vikings. Even if Hicca was as tough and deadly as they were, her way was different from theirs. Where Vikings were people to face things head on, ninja preferred stealth and shadow. They would probably still see her as an oddity, an outcast. She didn't know if she could take that anymore.

Then there was also the issue of her dragon. Even if she killed the Red Death and had managed to end the dragon raids, dragons and Vikings had still been enemies for centuries. What if they tried to shoot Toothless out of the sky as they approached? What if they didn't but they wouldn't let Toothless stay? She could never live without Toothless.

She decided she had to check it out. She would go in alone, and using her stealth skills see if it was safe enough for her companion. With her plan set in mind she and Toothless continued toward the island in the distance to wait until nightfall.

* * *

><p>Stoick the Vast sat at the largest center table in the great hall. All around him, his people were talking, laughing, drinking, eating, and even fighting. The entire atmosphere was jovial. The dragon sky parade had been as fantastic as always. A small smile came

to his face. His people were safe and happy. As the chief, it was the best feeling he could have. Yet Stoick felt a pang of heartache. What was a great celebration was also a reminder of the precious thing he had lost. His daughter. His precious little girl hadn't been seen in six years. Shortly after her disappearance, he had sent word to other tribes, in hopes that someone would see her. But no word had ever been heard of her. Under normal circumstances, someone who had been missing for this long would have been declared dead ages ago. But he could never bring himself to make the declaration.<p>

"Stoick, its time," said Spitelout to his right.

Looking to his brother in law, he nodded. Getting up from his seat, he made his way to the stage in the rear of the room. Many noticed his presence and went silent as they prepared to her him speak. Reaching the center of the stage, he looked out into the faces of his people and forced himself to smile. "Well, here we are," he began, his voice so loud that everyone I the room could hear him. "Six years of peace with the dragons. And life couldn't be better," he paused as the crowd gave confirmative cheer in agreement. Raising his hands, he silenced them before continuing. "As always, I want to say congratulation to everyone for keeping the island going for another year. And congratulations to Ash Hofferson and the rest of the academy on their work with the dragons. Odin knows this village would have burned down several times over by now if it weren't for them," he joked. The crowd all chuckled along with him heartily. "So thank you Ash and the rest of the academy," he said honestly. The crowd all looked to the table where Ash and his friends were sitting. They all shouted thanks to them and raised their mugs. The academy all nodded in acknowledgment. "And lastly," Stoick called out, regaining the crowd's attention. "Let us all say thank you to Hicca. Who is the reason for all of this. To Hicca! Wherever you are, I hope you are at peace," he finished sadly.

"TO HICCA!" came a collective shout from the crowd. With that, they all turned back to the feast. To celebrate the village's accomplishments. Stoick nodded in satisfaction at his speech. Then he stepped off the stage. Making his way to the doors of the great hall he waved and laughed with his people as he went. Finally when he reached the doors, he pushed them open and exited the hall. Stoick preferred to spend the rest of his night alone. He wanted to be alone with the memories of his daughter. He did this every year. Gobber and Spitelout respected his wishes and took over the cleanup of the feast. Making his way to his home, he paused at the door and let out a sad sigh. He turned around and looked out over his village. It was beautiful, the full moon of the night illuminating it with it pale moonbeams.

"Goodnight Hicca. I love you," he whispered to himself. Then he slowly turned around and made his way into his home. He wouldn't be seen for the rest of the night, and possibly into the midday.

* * *

><p>Hicca was hiding in an alley between two houses and she looked around the village in amazement. After the sun had gone down, Hicca and Toothless had flown back to Berk, before landing in the cove where they had bonded. There she dismounted and told Toothless to wait for her to return as she went to scope out the village. She left Toothless's tailfin locked open in case she had to call out for him

for a rescue. She hadn't known what to expect when she snuck into the village. But this was behind her wildest dreams.<p>

All around, the designs to the houses and other innovations to the village had obviously been made to accommodate dragons. There were perches on top of houses, and they looked more solidly built to hold their weight. There looked to be feeding station full of fish in the center of the village. Then there was also a dragon stable and then there were these strange stands built that look like it was meant for watching some kind of sporting event.

As he continued to make her way through the village, she stuck to the shadows, not wanting to be discovered. A patrolman was wandering the streets, behind him was a Deadly Nadder, following loyally behind and keeping its eyes open for intruders. Hicca has been glad she had rubbed a special scent over herself to hide her smell. Otherwise the dragon's might had taken notice of her. They did actually, they would catch glimpse of her darting between houses. They didn't know what to make of it and if they came to investigate, Hicca would make sure she would move to another spot before they reached her.

As Hicca moved between houses, she noticed that the village seemed empty. Almost all the houses were dark and she wondered where everyone was. She assumed they were in the great. _Maybe they're celebrating something?_ She thought with a shrug. Hicca was slowly making her way up the slope of the village. Drawn to a familiar house built at the highest point in the village. Her house. As she came up to it, she noticed that it was largely unchanged in comparison to the rest of the village. She wondered if her dad was home.

She came up to the side of the house that contained the window to her old room. Looking up, she noticed that the window was open. Reaching into her back pouch, she pulled out and slipped on her hand claws. Digging them into the wood she climbed the sider of her old home, making her way up to the window. When she reached the window sill, she grabbed on and pulled herself in. Touching down silently on the floor, she took in her old room. It was the same as ever. It was covered in dust from years of obvious being unoccupied. It looked as if all her belonging had been untouched. Looking over to her bed, she spotted a familiar object. Walking over, she picked up the object and held it between her hands, smiling fondly. It was her mother's breast helmet. What had once grossed her out, now she held dear to her heart. It was the only thing that she had from her mom, and she was happy to see it. Placing it down, she closed her eyes and focused on her hearing.

She could hear breathing downstairs. Her father was home. She made her way across the room silently. Pausing at the door, she pulled it open slowly, just wide enough for her to slip out. Coming to the edge of the stairs, she could see that the fireplace was lit. The first floor was illuminated by its orange light. Descending a few steps, she crouched and peeked over the side and into the kitchen area, and her breath caught in her throat.

It was her father. He was sitting at the kitchen table in his familiar chair. He was looking down at the table blankly with a mug in his hand, he looked to be lost in thought. Hicca had to fight the urge to call out to him, to run to him and throw her arms around him, but she managed. She wanted to talk to him. But she didn't know what to say. Where would they even begin? How would she explain where she

had been all this time and what she was wearing?

She deliberated what she should do before coming to a decision. Climbing back up the stairs, she stepped onto the thick wooden rafters. Going slow, she made her way across them until she was perched directly over her father. Reaching into her back pouch, she pulled out a small vial of liquid. Uncapping the vial, she reached out her arm and positioned it over his mug. Tipping the vial to its side a few times, she let a three to four drops of the sleeping agent fall into his mug. She retracted her arm and put away the vial and then waited.

It was only a minute before Stoick took a few gulps of his mead. So lost in thoughts and memories of his child that he didn't notice the strange taste of what had been added. Suddenly his eyes got heavy. He tried to shake the sleepiness off, but it fought back with a vengeance. He hadn't noticed he was so exhausted. Deciding to call it a night he made a move to rise from his chair. He gave up when he noticed that he was comfortable enough. Dropping back and relaxing, he let sleep overtake him. He prayed that he see Hicca in his dreams.

Hearing her father's snores as evidence that the sleeping agent had done its job, Hicca dropped down from the rafters. Slowly, she approached her father's sleeping form. When she reached him, she took in his face. He looked mostly the same, only older. There were now gray hairs in his beard and hair. His face also had new wrinkles she was sure hadn't always been there. Her heart clenched as she fought the urge to reach out to him and touch his face.

"Hey daddy," she finally said. "It's me Hicca. I know you can't hear me, but I just wanted to say thatâ€¦I'm happy to see you're ok. And that the village is alright," she said quietly. Taking a breath she pressed on, "I also wanted to say I'm sorry I couldn't be the daughter you wanted. I tried my best to be a proper Viking. I tried to be big and strong like you. I started eating huge amounts of food for a whileâ€¦in hopes that I would get bigger. We know how that worked out. All it did was make me sick," he said with a sad chuckle. "Anyway, I've gotten a lot stronger now. I think that if you saw what I could do nowâ€¦I think you'd be really proud of me. Or maybe not. My training and style isn't exactly the 'Viking way', and you were never good at understanding and accepting me," she said dropping her gaze. "So anyway, I guess I'll go now. Be safe and be happy. I love you," she finished. With that, she rose on her tip toes and kissed him lightly on the cheek. Then she paused to look into his face one more time. It took all her willpower to turn away and make her way back up the stairs. Going back into her old room, she closed the door behind her and looked it over one last time.

Taking in every detail, her eyes landed on the helmet on the bed once more. She walked over and picked it up. She traced her fingers over the cool, lustrous metal lovingly. She deliberated keeping it. It was hers after all. It was the last thing she had from her mother. After mulling over the pros and cons of taking it, she came to a decision. Clutching it to her chest, she went to the window and leapt out. Landing on the ground in crouch, she kept the helmet closely to her before standing up.

Looking around and seeing no one. She walked to the back of her old home and headed into the woods. She mentally kicked herself for her

cowardliness. She thought she had become fearless, but deep down, she was still that little girl who feared her father's rejection.

* * *

><p>Ash exited the doors of the great hall and breathed in the cool night air. He'd had enough for the night. His friends and other tribe members kept asking him about the girl he was supposed to meet. They also kept jokingly asking him when the wedding was. He didn't get why everyone seemed to be so intent on him getting married. No one was pressuring his friends to do it. He guessed that maybe it had to do with the fact that he might be the next chief.<p>

Going over the day's events he mind was stuck on what the elder had told him. The biggest thing on his mind was what she had said about his love being an 'old love'. The only 'old love' he'd ever had was Hicca. But with him about to meet this girl tomorrow, maybe the runes were just wrong this time. And then there's the darkness and shadow bit that he couldn't make heads or tails of. He sighed and stared out over the village, as if expecting to see an answer. Then out of the corner of his eye, Ash noticed movement.

Turning his head and looking closely, he could make out a black shape moving from the chief's house and towards the woods. Ash's eyes immediately narrowed, and he decided to follow after the shape. It might have been a spy of Siver's. He set off after it, staying far enough behind to not be noticed. When he followed the shaped into the woods, he could see that it was a person. Keeping hidden behind trees, he stepped carefully and continued to follow behind them. Wondering what this person's nefarious purpose was.

Hicca noticed she was being followed. She had heard her stalker the moment she entered the woods. Whoever they were, they were fairly good at being stealthy, but they were no ninja. If it weren't for her inhuman hearing she probably wouldn't have noticed him.

She stopped and turned around. Whoever it was, they were hiding behind a tree about 10 feet from where she was looking. Bending down, she set her mother's helmet down lightly before picking up a few pebbles off the forest floor. Picking up four, she took one in her right hand, keeping the rest in her left. Throwing the rock up and down to calculate its weight, she then threw it like she would a shuriken, hitting the tree squarely, letting her stalker know she knew he was there.

Ash froze as he felt something hit the tree he was hiding behind. There was no way this person could tell he was hiding behind here. Ash's stealth skill were some of the best. He stood perfectly still, hoping that the person would think they were mistaken. But then he felt something else hit the tree. A few moments later another projectile hit the tree. Ash straightened up, there was no point in hiding now. Whoever it was obviously knew he was there. Stepping out from behind the tree, he took in the intruder. His eyes widened as he got a look at them, or her.

From the shape of the person's body, he concluded that it was a female. She was wearing all black, and her mouth and nose were covered by a black mask. At her feet he saw a familiar object. A helmet. Not just any helmet, the helmet of Stoick's deceased wife. Looking into the person's eyes, he stared threateningly, "What are

you doing with that? What did you do with the chief? Are you one of Siver's men?" he demanded harshly.

Hicca had frozen up at the familiar sight of Ash. She couldn't believe how handsome he had gotten. Her heart fluttered in her chest and she was glad she had a mask and it was so dark outside that it hid her blush. He had gotten so tall and manly. His eyes still held that fierceness they did from when he was a child though. Her eyes wandered down his body and stopped at his chest. His muscular, probably rock hard, solidâ€” Hicca shook her head to clear her thoughts. She processed what Ash had said to her. _Who's Siver?_ She thought to herself.

"Answer me intruder, or else," Ash said darkly.

In the old days, old Hicca would have been scared stiff by Ash's threat. But new Hicca was unimpressed. She snorted indifferently and raised an eyebrow. Cocking her hip to the left she placed her left hand on it. With the middle and forefinger on her right hand she gestured for Ash to come at her.

Ash cocked an eyebrow at the woman's indifference to his threats. Her body language indicted she saw him as no threat. He wondered if this girl was really brave or just stupid. Then she had the gall to gesture for him to come at her. Narrowing his eyes at her, he decided to meet her challenge. He took a step forward to advance on her when her arm suddenly shot out and hurled something at him. It was too fast as the projectile hit him between the eyes. Bringing his hand up to rub at the spot in surprise, he moved his hand away and his eyes widened as another ,black, projectile was flying at him. He had not time to dodge as the object hit him between the eyes and with a noise that sounded like breaking eggshells something burst from the egg and into his eyes.

He immediately brought his hands to his eyes and attempted to vigorously clear them. He found that to be an error as whatever the stuff was, he made it go deeper. Hearing light footsteps, he looked and saw the intruder charging toward him. He attempted to swing at her, but with his impaired vision, he couldn't land a blow. Blinking to clear his vision he noticed that the woman wasn't in front of him anymore. Suddenly he felt a sharp prick at his neck. The woman had stabbed him with something. He whirled around, trying to backhand the woman but she dodged. He kept trying to swing at her, but she was too quick and his clouded vision wasn't helping. Then he noticed he was unintentionally getting sluggish. He realized that he had been poisoned. After realizing this, he was knocked off his feet, as the woman swept his legs out from under him. Landing on his back, he closed his eyes in pain as his head hit the ground. He quickly opened them as much as he could when he felt a weight on him. The woman had lowered herself onto him and was straddling him. He tried to reach up and grab her, but she caught his arms by the wrists before pinning them on the ground above his head. He was surprised at the woman's strength. He probably would have been able to push her off him, but his muscles were slowly locking up. He fought valiantly for a few more moments before he went completely still.

Relenting, he glared up defiantly into the face of the woman, whose face was inches away. As he was going down, he would go down glaring her to death. He looked into the woman's face as hair cascaded down and onto his own. He gasped lightly at seeing that her eyes were

green. And something about them was just familiar. He searched his memory trying to think of where he had seen those eyes before.

Hicca gazed into Ash's handsome face as her heart settled from the confrontation. She had used to last rock as a distraction, followed by a black egg full of blinding powder. Then she had stabbed him with a dart coated in a paralyzing agent. Her plan had worked perfectly and he was pretty much at her mercy. She could kill him if she wanted. But she didn't. Still, she decided that she would mess with him.

Releasing his arms, she sat back and reached her right hand down to her knife holster, and drew her kunai. Ash noticed her movement and tensed up. Leaning back over him, she pressed the blade against Ash's cheek. "Mmmmmm. So handsome," she said in her most sultry voice. "Lucky for you gorgeous I'm not in the mood for blood tonight," she said while trailing her knife lightly down his cheek. He remained perfectly still as she spoke. Hicca liked feeling this powerful and decided to take this step further. "But I think I will take this as a token of my victory," she said while leaning down. Using her left hand she covered Ash's eyes before sheathing her kunai and using her now free hand to pull down her mask. Then slowly she pressed her lips against Ash's. She felt Ash's body tense up in surprise before relaxing. Hicca was really enjoying this kiss. Feeling brave, she stuck her tongue into Ash's mouth and rubbed it against his. She heard Ash make a noise in surprise by her bold move and she smiled against his lips.

Deciding that it was time to go, she withdrew her tongue and removed her lips from his. Then she pulled her mask back up and removed her hands from over his eyes. Locking eyes with him, she suppressed a giggle at his shocked expression. She gave him a wink before she rose up off him and walked back to her mother helmet. Picking it up, she smiled to herself in pride. She had just beaten Ash Hofferson in a fight. She really had gotten stronger.

She then brought her hand up to touch her covered lips. That had been her first kiss. She had liked it a lot. She was surprised she still had these feelings for Ash. She hadn't thought about him much over the years. Yet she felt like she was a teenage girl again.

With a sigh, she could only wonder what could have been. With that, she walked towards the cove to get Toothless. They were going to move one. Hopefully she could determine what she wanted to do with her life now.

* * *

><p>Ash's mind had gone into over drive as he tried to figure out where he had seen the woman's eyes. Then there was her voice. It was different, and yet familiar. Like something he had heard years ago, but different. He had been surprised when he felt the woman kiss him. But strangely, he had found himself relax as she deepened it.<p>

Suddenly his eyes widened in realization. He knew where he had heard the voice and seen those eyes. He hadn't seen or heard them in six years. That's why he couldn't figure it out.

The voice and the eyes had belonged to a girl who hadn't left his

thoughts in six years. A girl who had stolen his heart. A girl who was believed to be dead. A girl who had been the first person to tame and fly a dragon.

It couldn't be. Hicca?

* * *

><p>Boom new chapter. Hope everyone likes this. what did ya'll think of Ash's and Hicca's reunion? Feel free to review and leave suggestions.

8. Chapter 8

New Mission

After a few hours of uselessly trying to will his body into action, the paralyzing agent's effects began to wear off. Slowly Ash started to feel his limbs respond to his commands. It started with his fingers. One by one he began to curl and uncurl them. Eventually his entire right arm started responding, followed by his left. Then he could curl his toes as the feeling in his legs came back. After he could feel his entire body was back under his control, he tried standing up.

Rolling over onto his arms and knees, he slowly raised himself off the ground. His entire body felt sluggish at having been frozen in the same position. He stumbled a bit when he finally managed to get himself standing upright. Then he put one foot in front of the other as he slowly trudges his way back to Berk as quickly as he could.

He had urgent news to tell everyone. Hicca was alive. She had returned.

* * *

><p>Stoick exited his house as the sun was reaching its peak for the morning. He still felt groggy from last night. He chalked it up to a little too much mead. He always tended to indulge in it on the day of the annual anniversary celebration. With a yawn he stretched his muscles and started making his way to the great hall.<p>

As he went over what happened last night he found something very peculiar. _Hicca._ He could have sworn he heard Hicca's voice last night. Or at least it sounded like Hicca's voice. That had never happened before. Sure occasionally he would dream and reminisce about the times when she was still around, but last night was different. Her voice sounded so real, so impossibly close. Shaking his head at his own foolishness Stoick was determined to do make the announcement he had decided on.

Entering the great hall, his people greeted him cheerfully, still joyful and hearty from last night's celebration. He smiled and waved back before making his way through the throng of tables and toward the stage. Stepping up on the stage and facing the crowd, he raised his hand to silence them.

When he had their undivided attention, he spoke, "Mornin' all. I hope you had a good celebration last night," he said. The crowd responded

with a cheer and raised their mugs. "I'm glad you did. I'm glad we're at peace with the dragons and I'm glad it has lasted all these years. I sincerely hope that this peace will continue for generation to come," he said earnestly. The crown gave another cheer in agreement. "Now there's something I need to say," he added, his tone immediately silencing the crowd as they saw it held importance. "For too long I've put this off. As a father, I just couldn't accept the fact that my daughter was gone. But its time I've accepted it," he said, casting his gaze down in sadness. The crowd remained silent as their hearts went out for their beloved chief. Blinking away tears, he looked back up into the faces of the crowd. "It's time I looked to Berk's future, and let the past go. So I, Stoick the Vast, chief of the Hooligan tribe of Berk, declare my daughter, Hicca Horrendous Haddock," he paused to swallow the lump in his throat. Taking a breath, he was determined to finish his declaration, "To be de-

"SHE'S ALIVE!" came a shout from the entrance of the great hall that had come after a great banging of the doors being thrown open.

With the shout, the chief's declaration was interrupted, as he looked up to see where the shout had come from, he was surprised when he saw it was Ash. He watched as Ash ran through tables and stood in front of the stage looking up at him.

"Chief, Hicca is alive. I saw her last night, she's back," Ash blurted out.

Stoick narrowed his eyes and rubbed his temples. Odin damn it. Why now of all times was someone trying to keep him from letting his daughter go? With a sigh he looked down into the face of Ash, "Look son. I know you want to believe that, but we need to face facts. Hicca is gone, she has been for a long time. I know it hard but it's time toâ€œ"

"No chief, I really did see her last night, I swear," Ash pressed. "I mean she was wearing a mask so I couldn't see her face," he said admittedly. "But she had green eyes, her voice was similar, and she even had her mother's breast plate helmet," he said in a quick breath.

Stoick raised an eyebrow at Ash. He searched his face, trying to detect if Ash was lying. He couldn't see anything in his face telling him that he was. Plus Ash wasn't a liar. And he wasn't immature enough to pull a prank like this. "So where is she now then?" he asked.

"I don't know. She got away from me and was headed into the forest. I believe in the direction of the cove," Ash replied.

Some part deep in Stoick suddenly burned with hope. What if what Ash was saying was true? What if his daughter was alive and she had come back? Settling down, Stoick steadied his nerves. He didn't want to get his hopes up too high. Scanning the crowd, he saw Gobber. "Gobber, go with Ash to the cove and see what you can find. I need to check something in my home," he ordered. With that, he quickly descended the stage before rushing out of the great hall and towards his home. Bursting in through his front door, he quickly pounded up the steps before pausing outside the door to Hicca's room. He closed his eyes and took a breath through the nose, trying to slow his madly

beating heart.

Then slowly he pushed the door open and looked onto the bed to gaze at the helmet he always left lying there. His eyes widened in shock as he saw it wasn't there. Stepping into the room he darted his head to and fro, trying to find the helmet. He thought that maybe there was a chance he had put it somewhere else. When he couldn't spy it on any of the furniture he grabbed the bed by its side and flipped it over. The helmet wasn't under the bed either.

Stoick's mind raced as he tried to think of a likely explanation. But he couldn't find one. He knew that he had left it in the room. Plus it's not like anyone in Berk would just barge into the chief's house and take something. And a helmet was a dime a dozen. No one was going to steal his wife's breast helmet. It held no real value, except sentimental. But even then, that was only to himself andâ€¦_Hicca, _he realized with a gasp.

With that, the chief left his house in a mad sprint. He burst out of the back door and tore off into the woods. He headed straight for the secret cove that Ash had shown him all those years ago. The very cove where Hicca had hidden her dragon. His mind was racing at all the evidence that was before him. Could it really have been Hicca? But if it was, why hadn't she just come back? Where had she been all these years? Why did she leave again? Stoick shook his head to rid himself of those thoughts. The first thing he needed to do was confirm that it was her. Then he had to find her.

Reaching the entrance to the cove, he squeezed his way through and descended the slope. Finally reaching the bottom, he saw Gobber and Ash standing there, looking down at the ground. "Gobber, what did you find?" Stoick asked while approaching them.

Gobber turned to look his chief in the eyes. "This," he said while gesturing to a black mark on the ground. Stoick looked at the mark and then back into Gobber's face. He didn't get what he was getting at. Sensing his confusion, Gobber explained, "A scorch mark. Only a couple hours old, and similar to the ones that were around six years ago. Then there are the tracks. Tracks of a dragon we've only ever seen once." Gobber then pointed to dragon tracks. Stoick looked them over and his eyes widened as he realized he couldn't recognize them. Stoick was a veteran dragon killer and he knew the footprints of all the common dragons.

"So thenâ€¦it could really be," the chief began slowly.

"Unless you know any other Night Furies that are native to Berk, then yes," Gobber said smiling. He turned to look his old friend in the eyes, "It's her Stoick."

Stoick stood there, trying to find the words to say. He couldn't believe it. His daughter was back. She had been in the village last night. In his house. He cursed himself for having fallen asleep. Then he rounded on Ash, "Why didn't you stop her lad?" Stoick said, finally finding his voice.

Ash flushed red in embarrassment. Looking down in shame he answered his chief, "I tried to chief. I thought she was a spy in the beginning. I tried to capture her andâ€¦she beat me," he muttered.

Stoick raised an eyebrow skeptically. "Hicca, beat you in a fight?" he asked in disbelief. That didn't seem possible. Hicca was never a fighter. Even if she could get lucky, to take down Ash Hofferson? That was crazy.

Ash nodded in confirmation. "She blinded me with something. Then she stabbed me with something that acted like Speed Stinger venom. I was paralyzed and she took me down," he explained. He left out the part where Hicca had tongue kissed him, unsure how the chief would respond. "She was wearing an all black outfit. And her nose and mouth were covered by a mask," he added.

Stoick was speechless at having heard his daughter beat Ash in a fight. What had she been doing all these years? Had someone taught her how to fight? And what was with her strange new appearance that Ash had described? Looking to Gobber, he saw that his eyes were wide, almost like he knew something. "Something on your mind Gobber?" he asked.

"No chief. Nothing at all," the blacksmith said while shaking his head.

Stoick wasn't convinced, but that didn't matter now. He turned back to Ash and locked eyes with him. "Ash, gather up your friends and start searching the nearby islands. Find her. Bring her back," he ordered firmly.

Ash held the chief's gaze and nodded firmly. With that, he ran off, exiting the cove and back towards the village. His mind was completely focused on Hicca. He almost couldn't believe it. She was back. If he found her he could see her again. He could tell her how he had felt all these years. He could apologize for all he had done to her during their childhood. They could be together.

"Oh Ash sweetie," the voice of his mother caught his attention as he came into the village. He looked over to where he voice had come from. There was his mother standing next to a girl with dark brown hair. The girl was very pretty. She was tall, slender, but he could tell she was very strong. "Come meet the girl I was telling you about," his mother said with a wide smile.

Oh yeah, Ash thought as he remembered he was supposed to meet this girl. He sighed and palmed his face. What he was going to do would upset his mother. It was also going to be very rude to the girl who had taken time to come to Berk. Standing up straight and taking a breath, he approached them. Standing in front of the girl, he steeled himself. The girl was smiling at him and blushing lightly. Then slowly he reached out and took her hands in his. The girl's blush deepened and she looked surprised. "Look whatever your name is. I'm sure you're a great girl and all, but I don't think you and I are gonna work out. It's not you it's me. I apologize for wasting your time. Ok gotta go bye," he said in one breath before dashing off. Leaving the shocked girl and mortified mother behind.

Ash ran to his home and saddled up Stormfly. The dragon could sense her rider's urgency and wondered what had him so riled up. Once Ash grabbed some supplies for a few day off Berk, he mounted Stormfly and flew toward the academy to get his friends.

* * *

><p>"I knew it!" Fishlegs cried in happiness from atop his dragon Meatlug. He was ecstatic to hear the news that Hicca was alive. He was eager to find her as his friends and he all flew in formation away from Berk.<p>

"I never doubted it for a second," Tuffnut said from atop his dragon's head Belch.

"Me neither," his sister said in agreement.

The others rolled their eyes at the twin's lies.

"I don't know guys, I'm not buying it," said Snotlout atop Hookfang in doubt. "I mean, where she has been all these years? And how did she get away from you Ash?" he asked his blonde friend.

"It doesn't matter," retorted Ash sharply, still slightly embarrassed at having been taken down by Hicca. "Alright guys, here's the plan, we all split up. Fishlegs goes north, the twins go south, Snotlout goes east, and I'll go west. Scout out the islands in that direction and meet back on Dragon Island at sunset. If you see Hicca, do not engage. Its gonna take all of us to catch her," he said sternly. "Everybody clear?" he asked while looking over his shoulders and back to his friends. When they all gave an affirmative nod he gave the signal to split up. He headed westward and prayed that they would find Hicca.

Please let us find her. There's so much I want to say to her.

* * *

><p>Hicca was circling an island north of Berk. She wasn't really doing much but clearing her head as she flew. She was mentally kicking herself for not speaking with her father. She had wanted to talk to him so badly. She wondered if he missed her. She wondered if he thought about her at all over the past six years. She had missed him. How could she not, he was her father, her family. But there was still an innate fear of his disapproval. She had faced that throughout most of her childhood and she couldn't go back to that.<p>

But maybe he's changed? She thought to herself. The village had been reconstructed to accommodate dragons after all. That could have only been implemented with his approval. If she went back, Toothless would be welcome. But would she be? Even if her father wanted her back would the rest of the village? She had done a lot of damage to the village during her numerous attempts to be a dragon killer before she met Toothless. A lot of them would have been fine if she had disappeared. She wondered if Ash would have liked her to come back.

Ash, she thought with a blush. He had become so handsome. Thoughts of him still made her knees shake and her heart flutter. She remembered back to the time he had given her a kiss on the cheek. She wondered what would have happened if she had stayed. Maybe they would have gotten together? Maybe they would even be married by now? A goofy smile formed on Hicca's face at the thought. She couldn't deny that she still had feeling for him after all these years.

Laying back against the saddle and looking up at the sky, she let out a gusty sigh. She couldn't think of what she should do. Maybe she should go back to Japan? Or maybe she and Toothless should just keep exploring the world. She had learned so many amazing things from Japan after all. What more could she learn if she kept exploring? That didn't sound too bad. She and Toothless could be their own tribe.

_No one would judge me. No one would mock me. No one would call me 'Useless'. No one would bully me. No one would disown me. _These thoughts came to mind with bitterness. All these years Hicca had never gotten angry at the people who had made her life miserable. She had never been angry at her father for disowning her. She suddenly wondered why she had wanted to go back to Berk so badly. Mayumi had been right. She had it much better in Japan. Why should she bother with or care about all the people who turned their back on her. Hicca suddenly became angry at everyone from the tribe. She didn't need them. She was strong enough to take care of herself. Plus she had Toothless. He would never turn his back on her.

Who needs them, Hicca thought to herself. With a nod, Hicca sat up and directed Toothless to land. Toothless and her would spend the night on this island and then leave in the morning.

* * *

><p>A few miles away, hovering in a cloud was a figure. Peeking from the cloud with spyglass in hand, Fishlegs watch a black dragon circle over and island in the distance. His heart pounded in excitement as he recognized the dragon as a species he hadn't seen in six years. It was a Night Fury. He watched as it suddenly spiraled down and landed on the island.<p>

"Come one girl, we gotta go get the others," Fishlegs told his dragon Meatlug with a smile. He had found her. Hicca really was back.

With that, he steered Meatlug towards Dragon Island to rendezvous with his friends. There were still a few hours of light left, he prayed to the gods that Hicca wouldn't go anywhere.

* * *

><p>It was nighttime as Hicca stared down at her mother's helmet in her hands. She and Toothless were camping in a large cave they had found. They made a small fire and Hicca was sitting with her back against Toothless's side. She was lost in thought as she contemplated what she should do with her life. Apart of her liked the idea of traveling some more. The freedom, the different cultures, people, and maybe even dragons. But it sounded very lonely. As much as she loved Toothless she came to realize how important people were. Mayumi had shown her that.<p>

A croon pulled her from her thought. Glancing to her right, she looked into the face of Toothless who looked at her in concern. She smiled and scratched him under the chin. Making him purr.

"I'm ok bud. I just don't know what we should do," he said with a sigh. "I mean, we could just keep going. We could keep traveling and explore new lands. Does that sound good to you?" she asked her

companion. Toothless looked into her eyes and smiled. He would follow her anywhere. She was his treasure, and Toothless liked exploring. There was freedom in it. He crooned in answer affectionately at her. This caused her to smile. She loved Toothless with all her heart. He had stood by her all these years. Encouraging her, training with her, and helping her grow into the woman she was now.

"I thought you might like the idea. But then there's Berk. Despite everything the tribe put me through, it always been home. And then there's my dad," she said sadly. "And then there Ash," she added with a dreamy sigh. "He's gotten so good looking. With his sky blue eyes. His golden hair. That body," she said while her face broke into a dazed grin. Toothless snorted at her and yawned. "Oh I'm sorry, am I boring you?" she asked, narrowing her eyes at the dragon and putting her hands on her hips. Toothless leaned his head over to her before snorting smoke into her face. Hicca coughed lightly and wafted the smoke away from her face. She glared at the dragon who warbled at her in laughter. Then she leapt to her feet before throwing her mother's helmet to the side.

"Oh it's on reptile!" she said in challenge. She lowered and took a battle stance. Toothless leapt to his feet and crouched low. They circled each other, with Hicca keeping a mock serious expression on her face, and Toothless growling playfully. "Hicca the kunoichi and the Kage no Ryu. Once friends, they are now locked in a duel to the death," Hicca muttered playfully. Then Toothless dared forward. He swiped at her gently with his left paw. Hicca side stepped the attack and gave him a light karate chop on his head. Toothless tried to counterattack with his other paws, swiping it horizontally. Hicca ducked and threw a light punch, bopping him on the nose. Toothless growled in irritation before turning his body and swiping at her with his tail. She leapt over the tail before grabbing it with both her hands. Toothless looked at her as she smiled in victory. Toothless wasn't a good loser. With a flick of his tail, he picked her up off the ground and threw her onto his back. But Hicca caught herself and with both hands pushed off his back, doing a flip in midair, she landed in front of him with a cheeky smile.

"I win," she while sticking her tongue out at him. Toothless growled in irritation before charging at her. Bumping her with his head, he knocked her off her feet and flat on her back. With that he loomed over her and smiled. Obviously thinking he had just won. Hicca smiled before throwing a few punched at the dragon. "Man and dragon. Enemies once more," she cried. Toothless responded by pawing at her playfully. They threw their light attacks for a few moments before Toothless dropped his head down onto her upper body. "Agggghhhhhh," Hicca said in mock defeat. She laid still for a moment before Toothless proceeded to lick her face. "Ack. Toothless. Ewww. Get off me," she shrieked while pushing his head away.

She immediately got up before wiping at her face with her sleeves. She glared at Toothless who just laughed in response. She couldn't help but laugh too. He always managed to cheer her up. Settling down, she extended her right hand toward him, presenting her palm. Toothless recognized the gesture and stepped forward, pressing his snout against her hand and closing his eyes. He purred in contentment and relaxed. Hicca smiled and knelt down before bringing her other hand to scratch him under the chin. Toothless opened his eyes and looked into the green eyes of his rider.

"I love you hun'" she said honestly. She then put her arms around his head and squeezed him in affection. "As long as I have you hun', I'll always be ok," she whispered to him. Toothless crooned at her. He felt the same way about her. Pulling back, she stood up and continued to smile at him. He held her gaze before suddenly his ear nubs began to twitch. His eyes narrowing, he turned his head toward the entrance of the cave stalked toward it. Hicca cocked her head to the side. He was obviously sensing something. Joining him at the entrance, she focused on her hearing.

After a moment of listening she heard what Toothless was hearing. Human voices. As she listened she could tell that the voices were familiar. She heard the voice of her cousin Snotlout. Then she could make out the voices of the twins. Then Fishlegs and Ash. Toothless growled to get her attention. Looking to him, his face was asking her what they should do.

Hicca patted him on the head. "Stay here bud. I'll handle this," she said confidently. She then turned her direction to the forest and pulled up her mask. Breaking into a light jog, she made her way to the voices.

With a mischievous smile, she determined that this was the perfect moment to show her former peers what she could do.

* * *

><p>"So remind me again why we're not looking for Hicca with our dragons?" Snotlout asked in annoyance.<p>

"We have to try and convince Hicca to come back willingly. If she sees us coming with our dragons she might take off and since Toothless would be faster than all our dragons and blend into the night sky, we would never be able to catch them," Fishlegs answered. It had been his idea to look for Hicca on foot. Currently they were all walking through the forest with lanterns, looking for signs of a camp. After he met up with everyone on Dragon Island, he had led them to the island he had seen the Night Fury land and they left their dragons at the beach.

"Ugh but it so boring and slow," Ruffnut complained with a groan.

Ash who was leading the way, stopped and turned to face his friends. "Enough everyone. We're supposed to be stealthy here," he whispered sharply. Everyone immediately went silent. They could see how serious Ash was about this mission. They all knew that Ash had been carrying a flame for Hicca all these years. Now he was more determined than anyone to bring her back. "Now come on, let's go," he ordered before facing forward and continuing on.

The other obeyed and marched after him. They walked in silence for a few more minutes as they looked for any sign of a human presence. The forest was eerily silent. Everyone, save for Ash, got the creeps from it. Ash was too focused on his mission to care.

"Hey guys," came a low mutter from Fishlegs. Slowly they all turned around to face him. He was glancing at something to his right. Following his gaze, they all saw what he was looking at. About fifty feet away from the group was a figure dressed in all black. It was a

woman who was staring at all of them as she casually leaned back against a tree with her arms crossed over her chest.

"It's her," Ash whispered aloud.

"Alright finally," shouted Snotlout. He then started marching toward Hicca. "I don't know if that's you or not Hicca. But whoever you are, you're coming with us," he said belligerently. The figure looked unimpressed at Snotlout's advance. When he got within ten feet of her, she finally stood up before walking behind the tree and out of sight. When Snotlout reached the tree, he quickly came around it, and found nothing there. Mouth falling open in surprise, he looked around for the woman who was supposedly his cousin. Then he looked back at the group in shock. He shook his head in bewilderment as he tried to fathom how the woman had disappeared. She had only gone behind the tree, he would have seen her if she had run to another one.

The other ran to his side while scanning the forest. They were also surprised by the fact that Snotlout had come up empty. They hadn't seen the woman dart to another tree. She should have been there.

"Look over there," Tuffnut called out while pointing. Following the direction where he was pointing, they saw the woman watching them again, her demeanor completely relaxed. As they started advancing on her she ducked behind the tree again. When the group reached the tree and looked behind it, once again the woman was gone. This process continued for another few minutes as a member of the group would find the figure standing in the distance and they would rush in to grab her, only to find she had gone.

Ash knew Hicca was toying with them. She was obviously leading them somewhere only she knew. But even though he didn't like it, he was forced to follow along. Finally after chasing the figure for what seemed like hours, the group was led into a small round clearing. They looked around as they all tried to spot the retreating woman. But no matter how hard they looked, they couldn't find her. They all listened into the silence of the night, hoping to catch a trace of movement, but to no avail.

Ash cursed silently at having lost her. He had to find her. He just had to.

"Well, well, well. If it isn't my oldâ€¦'friends'," came a voice from the darkness. The voice carried a hint of sarcasm at the word 'friend'. The group looked around, but they couldn't pinpoint the origin of the voice.

From the shadows, Hicca took in her former peers. Like her, all of them had changed over the years. Like her cousin Snotlout. The boy was now the shortest of all of them. It looked like Hicca matched him in size now. He was still stocky like when he was a child, but he looked like he had gotten a bit more muscle mass. His chin seemed to have broadened and he now wore a dark fur half jacket. He seemed to be sporting a light amount of facial hair on his upper lip and on his head was the same horned helmet he wore as a child. He still seemed about as arrogant and proud as ever.

"Ah Snotlout, my stupid cousin," Hicca called out. "Still brawns over brains like always I see," she said mockingly. She watched as her

peers tried uselessly to find her. Unless she wanted them to, they wouldn't locate her.

Her eyes then wandered over to Fishlegs. She thought he had been huge when they were kids. But now he was gigantic. He stood at the same height with Ash, but his body was like a wall of solid muscle. He was sporting light facial hair and his face was still round, yet mature. He still wore that ridiculously small Viking helmet he had since they were kids. His new look consisted of a light brown fur tunic with a darker brown fur cape. He also wore fingerless fur gloves on his hands and had a series of pouches going across his chest, with a sheathed knife at one end.

"Wow Fishlegs look at you. You're huge," she said impressed. "You're probably the only one from the tribe that I'm genuinely happy to see," she added. Fishlegs had been the only one from the tribe who had never insulted or bullied her. That made him ok to her.

Then she turned her gaze to the twins. Looking at Ruffnut first, she immediately noticed her height growth. She looked to be just a few inches under six feet. She had become very slender over the years and in Hicca's opinion, she was quite pretty. Like herself, she noticed that Ruffnut had filled out a little over the years and her facial features had become more pronounced and womanly. Her outfit had changed to a light brown fur vest, with a purple tunic, brown leggings, and dark fur boots. Her hair was in the same style she had it when they were kids and she also wore the same helmet as well.

"Ruffnut. Hey girlfriend, how've ya been?" she asked. She smiled as Ruffnut's eyes widened and dart to and fro at being addressed.

Lastly was her bother Tuffnut. He had the same helmet from childhood, but his hair was now in dreadlocks that ran down all over his head. On his arms he wore studded leather arm bands. He now wore a dark gray fur vest with a light purple tunic along with brown pants and boots with spike knee pads. He was as tall as his sister and had a goatee now.

"Tuffnut you still look like an idiot," Hicca said bluntly.

"I'm freaking out," Tuffnut whispered in fear. The others, save Ash, nodded in agreement and tried to suppress their panic. It's like Hicca was all around them. Her voice seemed to be coming from everywhere and nowhere all at once.

Ash just continued to scan his eyes over the darkness calmly. He knew that he had to stay calm. If he panicked, Hicca could get away like she had last time. He started to wonder why Hicca had led them here. It was a clearing. If she was so intent on hiding, that seemed counterproductive. He started to contemplate whether it was possible Hicca had led them into a trap when his thoughts were soon confirmed.

With a collective shout all of his friends were suddenly ensnared by a net trap that hoisted them off the ground. They cried out in protest as the net squished them together tightly, tangling their limbs and making it almost impossible to move.

Ash looked from his friends and back into the darkness. "Come out Hicca. We just want to talk," he called out. He continued to search the darkness for her. It was suddenly silent save for the whimpers and groans of his friends.

"Alright," came a voice behind him. Whirling around he saw Hicca step out from behind a tree. She still had her face covered up by that black mask as he took her in. "Talk," she said.

"Hicca," he started. At that, Hicca pulled down her mask and exposed her face. He suppressed a gasp at what he saw. With the lanterns his friends had dropped on the ground illuminating her face, Ash could now fully take her in. She was beautiful. She had definitely matured over the years, but her face was much the same as when they were children. It was definitely her.

"No way," came the voice of Snotlout from above them in amazement. He couldn't believe he was looking into the face of his cousin once again. Like many back on Berk, he had assumed she was dead. If she hadn't called him by name, he probably wouldn't believe it was really her.

Hicca and Ash stared at each other for a few moments. They almost couldn't believe they were seeing each other again so soon. Ash suddenly found his mouth had gone dry at seeing her. Hicca's heart fluttered at looking into Ash's eyes. They were both extremely attracted to each other, unbeknownst to the other.

Finally finding his voice, Ash spoke first. "Hicca. We've come to take you back to Berk."

"Why would I ever go back there?" Hicca said while narrowing her eyes.

"You already did," Ash pointed out.

Hicca blushed at this, glad it was too dark for him to see. "I just went to get my mother's helmet. It was mine anyway," she retorted.

"Look Hicca. Please come back. I want you to come back," Ash pleaded.

Hicca's eyes widened at Ash's statement. Ash wanted her to come back? _Maybe he has feelings for me?_ She thought with a warmth blooming in her chest. "Why do you want me to come back so badly?" she asked curiously.

Ash was caught off guard by her question. He hadn't expected it. Apart of him wanted to pour his heart out to her. To let her know how he had felt about her all these years. But suddenly he couldn't do it. He had never actually considered what _exactly_ he would say to her. Ash Hofferson, who was a man known for his fearlessness in battle, was suddenly scared stiff by the thought of confessing and being rejected. What if she didn't feel the same about him? He didn't want to be turned down by the only girl he had ever loved his whole life.

Coming up with something to say, he settled on, "Your father ordered us to bring you back." He mentally palmed himself for his sudden bout

of cowardliness.

Hicca's face immediately formed into a scowl. So that was what this was about. Her father was sending his men to fetch her. "I'm not a child anymore Ash," she said before crossing her arms over her chest. "And I haven't been a member of the tribe for six years. If my fathâ€"Stoick wants me back, he can't just snap his fingers and order me to return," he said coldly.

Ash narrowed his eyes at her. Why was she being so difficult? Why couldn't she just come home? Then when she was back, he could spend time with her and slowly gain her affection. That way when he did confess, she wouldn't reject him. "Doesn't matter what you want Hicca. I've got my orders," Ash said firmly.

With that, they both glared at each other. Both were irritated at the other's stubbornness. Finally they both broke eye contact.

Ash rubbed his eyes and took a breath before speaking, "Look Hicca, I don't wanna have toâ€"

"I don't want to hurt you Ash," Hicca said, cutting him off.

"What?" Ash asked, caught off guard by her statement. It had been what he was about to say.

"You helped me out in the past. You helped me get to Toothless and save the tribe. For that I owe you one. So just walk away and nobody gets hurt," she offered.

Ash raised an eyebrow at what she was insinuating. She was making it sound like she could beat him in a fight. He scoffed at her statement before replying, "Look Hicca, you got lucky the other night. You just caught me off guard is all," he said trying to wave off the fact that she had beaten him.

Hicca narrowed her eyes at him. "Oh really? 'I wasn't ready'. That's the excuse you're going with?" she asked with a smirk.

"It's the truth," Ash countered hotly.

"So are you ready now?" she asked sizing him up.

"Uhm...what?" Ash asked caught off guard.

"Are you ready now?" Hicca asked while cracking her neck and knuckles. So Ash thought it was just a lucky win huh? Well she was about to show him what she could really do.

"Whoa Hicca! I'm not gonna fight you!" Ash said holding up a hand to try and calm her.

"Then this is going to be a very one sided fight," Hicca said simply. With that, she locked eyes with Ash before smiling at the challenge. "Defend yourself Ash," she said in warning.

"Look, Hicca lets just calm down anâ€", " Ash began before Hicca charged at him. He stepped back in surprise as Hicca leapt at him. She jumped so high that she jumped up onto Ash's shoulders and wrapped he legs around his neck. He was trying his best to not fall

over by her added weight, before Hicca started punching him in the face. After landing a few blows Hicca leaned back, and using her full body weight sent Ash flying.

Landing on his back, Ash tried to get some air back into his lungs. After gasping for a few moments, he succeeded in picking himself up. When he got on his feet he was surprised at how unsteady he was. Hicca's punches had actually managed to daze him. Turning around to face Hicca he was immediately met with a left hook to the jaw. The force of which caused him to stumble back a few steps. He couldn't believe that it actually hurt. How had Hicca gotten so strong?

Realizing Hicca was serious, Ash got into battle stance of his own. He didn't want to hurt Hicca, but he wasn't going to be able to subdue her if he didn't fight back. He determined that he was going to have to knock her out. Coming to that decision, he threw a punch at Hicca, which she easily dodged and threw one of her own which connected with his face. This went on for a few more moments as Ash tried to land a blow on Hicca, which she easily dodged or blocked before landing a blow on him.

Hicca smiled to herself as she easily dominated Ash in their hand to hand exchange. Though he undoubtedly had strength on her, he was just too slow. Blow after blow she landed on Ash before he finally threw a right hook which she countered by grabbing his arm and throwing him to the ground and locking him in an arm bar. But before she could fully pull back the arm, he managed to hook his wrist with his other hand. With a great tug, he pulled his arms free before throwing himself on top of her and pinning her arms down at her sides.

"Ok Hicca, that's enough," Ash said between pants. With his superior strength, he had Hicca subdued. He watched as she struggled to push back against him, but to no avail. After a few moments she stopped struggling and stared up at him in a glare. Moving his face closer to hers, he tried to convince her one last time to come back willingly, "Ok. Now I'm gonnaâ€", but he was cut off as Hicca immediately reach up and bit him on the nose.

With enough force to pierce skin, she bit down on Ash's nose. As she had hoped he released her arms to bring his hands up to his nose. Using the opportunity she immediately kicked Ash in the chest hard enough to send him reeling back and off of her. Finally free, she leapt to her feet and took a few steps back to prepare for his next attack. She watched as Ash rubbed his nose in pain before glaring at her. Hicca just smirked proudly. Then Ash charged her. Hicca immediately turned and ran in the opposite direction. She heard Ash continue to chase her as she ran toward a tree. With Ash just a few steps behind her, she ran up the tree and pushed off of it. Flipping in midair, she threw her arms out and caught herself on Ash's shoulders.

Ash looked up at Hicca in surprise as she was performing a handstand on his shoulders. He couldn't believe how agile and coordinated she was. The old Hicca was likely to trip over herself in situation likes this. Yet here she was, perfectly balanced on his shoulders as if it was nothing.

Taking advantage of Ash's surprise, Hicca immediately slammed her knees into Ash's upper back and pushed off him, sending him stumbling

face first into the tree. Landing on her feet, she prepared to end the fight. Ash turned around with a grimace on his face. Hicca just smirked again at his expression. As he stepped forward to advance on her, Hicca cleared her head and focused. Closing her eyes she took a breath, and when she opened her eyes, the world had slowed down. Charging Ash, she immediately formulated a battle plan.

First. Disorient the opponent, she thought before she clapped both her hands over Ash's ears. Ash stumbled back as his ears started to ring. Watching his body, she read through his next attack._ Opponent is going to attempt right cross. Block with right arm_, she thought. As predicted, Ash threw a right cross, which she blocked with her dragon claw. _Now, crack ribs, _she told herself mentally as she pushed away his arms and brought her left fist into Ash's lower ribs on his left side. Ash let out a cry of pain. _Tap solar plexus, _she thought to herself before striking the vulnerable spot with her open palm. The air in Ash's lungs was immediately knocked out of him. _Don't give him the chance to breath. _Immediately she threw a punch firmly into his stomach. He bent over in pain as he gasped for air. _Finish him off. Roundhouse kick to temple. _Hicca immediately swung her leg up and aimed for Ash's head. To her surprise, he managed to dodge the attack. With her mind in overdrive, she thought up a new strategy. _Opponent is more resilient than anticipated. Use momentum for heel kick to jaw. _Missing Ash's head, she immediately planted her right leg down before using the momentum of her kick to spin on her toes. Throwing out her left leg, her heel struck Ash across the jaw. With spittle flying out of his mouth, Ash went down hard. Landing on his stomach he groaned in pain. Hicca stood over him with her hand at her sides. She let herself catch her breath as she took in her work. Ash was done, he wasn't getting up anytime soon.

She smiled to herself proudly at having beat Ash again. A lot of her tension and animosity she had been feeling toward the tribe seemed to have disappeared. She felt a lot lighter. Looking down at Ash she pointed a finger at him, "That's for being a jerk to me when we were kids," she said coldly. She was about to turn away, when she paused. Looking back to Ash, she paused before kicking him in the side and he grunted in pain. "And that's for everything else," she added.

As Ash continued to lie down in pain and groan Hicca took a shuriken from her pouch, she immediately tossed it at the rope holding up the net that was trapping her former peers. They fell down in a heap and immediately untangled themselves and got on their feet. They stared at her with awe. They couldn't believe that she had actually managed to beat Ash.

Mouths, agape they just continued to stare slack jawed as Hicca sauntered over to them. Pausing in front of them, she glared at them in challenge. Daring any one of them to try and stop her. They immediately settled aside to let her pass. She smiled to herself and walked by. As she was walking by her cousin, she paused. She cocked back her fist and made a motion like she was going to punch him. To her satisfaction, her cousin squeaked in fear and and flinched, throwing his hand up to protect his face. She smirked at her cousin's reaction and 'hmp'ed'. _Wuss_, she thought to herself. With that, she turned and continued on her way with her head held high.

The others watched her go. Not sure what they were going to tell the chief at letting her get away. Then they looked back to their leader who was unconscious on the ground.

He wasn't going to be happy when he woke up.

* * *

><p>After Hicca made her way back to her camp, she immediately packed up her things, saddled up Toothless and set off for another island. While in the air, her heart was hit with a pang of regret. She had wanted a reason to go back. She had wanted there to be a spark between her and Ash. She had wanted him to feel something for her. She had thought that maybe, when they were kids, there had been something beginning to form. But obviously she had been wrong.<p>

She sighed to herself as she and Toothless set off to an unknown destination. She wondered why her father had sent Ash to retrieve her. Maybe he wanted her back. Still, she didn't feel ready to face him just yet.

The thought of exploring more of the world and never coming back was starting to sound better every minute.

* * *

><p>New chapter. Hope you like. Ash got his ass kicked. Damn it man, why couldn't you just say it.

**On a side note. Who would like a pec pop of love scene in this story? Feel free to review and leave suggestions. I do take your suggestions into consideration when i write. **

9. Chapter 9

The Attack

Stoick walked around Berk while performing his chiefly duties. He settled disputes, oversaw the construction of a new food storage shed, helped carry the load of caught fish into the food stores, and even welcomed a newborn into the tribe. All the while, Stoick was only thinking of one thing. His daughter. He prayed to the gods that Ash and his friends would bring her back. He started thinking about what he should say to her. Gods know he had been a downright terrible father all those years. He didn't know how he would make it up to her, but he would find away.

"Look," called out a villager and pulling Stoick from his thoughts. Following where the villager was looking, he noticed four income dots in the sky. He immediately recognized them as the dragons of Ash and his friends. He watched as they descended from the sky and hovered near Gothi's hut. He noticed the group get off their dragons and dismiss them before going inside. Stoick wondered why they were back so soon. And with no Night Fury, he assumed they hadn't found Hicca.

Knowing he would get any answers from standing there, he made his way to Gothi's hut.

* * *

><p>Entering Gothi's hut, Stoick immediately took in the room. Gobber was standing at the foot of a bed used for treating the injured. To the right of the bed, with their backs' facing him were Ash's friends. Walking across the room to them, the younger people noticed him and allowed him room. Stoick gasped at who he saw was on the bed.<p>

It was Ash. He was laying on the bed shirtless and on his back. And he looked terrible. There was a dark bruise on his torso over his lower ribs. His face was in the worst shape. It was covered all over in dark bruises and his jaw looked swollen. Then there was a red gash on his nose that looked likeâ€|a bite mark?

"What in Odin's name happened?" he asked Ash's friends. He had never seen Ash look so worse for wear. Who could've possibly done this to him?

"We were kinda attacked?" Fishlegs said nervously while fiddling with hands.

Stoick raised an eyebrow at Fishlegs' explanation. Were they ambushed? And they had dragons, who would possibly attack them? "By who?"

The other all exchanged glances. They seemed reluctant to tell him who attacked them.

Finally Fishlegs took a breath before speaking up, "By Hicca," he answered.

Stoick looked at him like he was crazy. But he could tell that Fishlegs wasn't lying. His eyes the widened in surprise. "Hicca did this?" he asked in amazement while gesturing to Ash. Seeing all them nod in confirmation, his brain seemed to stop.

"You should've seen her chief," Tuffnut piped in, suddenly excited. "She was all like 'pow', 'wham', 'hiyah'," Tuffnut said while mimicking punching and kicking motions. "And Ash was all like, 'oomph', 'agh', and then he was all like 'ahhh'." Tuffnut added and mimicking being punched and hit in various places.

"She was amazing chief," Ruffnut said in agreement. Seeing Hicca beat Ash, had genuinely impressed her. "She was so fast. It was like we could hardly see her," she finished.

Stoick just continued to listen with a mix of pride and astonishment. He was still amazed that Hicca could do this to someone like Ash. But he couldn't help but feel pride that his baby girl could handle herself so well. She had obviously gotten much stronger over the years.

A grunt of pain suddenly caught everyone's attention. Ash was trying to get up. He was grimacing in pain and placing a hand over his injured ribs. Gothi attempted to push him down onto the bed to prevent further injury.

"I got to get back out there," he said though gritted teeth. He had to find Hicca. He had to bring her back.

"Easy lad you're in no shape to go out there," Gobber said while

coming around to push Ash down. "The elder says you've got a couple cracked ribs, a bruised jaw, and you look terrible to boot," Gobber added jokingly.

Ash opened his mouth to argue when Stoick cut in. "He's right lad. You stay put. When you're well enough you can go back out there," he said to reassure the young man. He knew Ash's loyalty knew no bounds. He might seriously injure himself if Stoick didn't cut in.

Ash looked his chief in the eyes. He was his leader, so relenting he laid back down on the bed and settle down. Gothi nodded and patted him on the arm before hobbling to the back of her hut to find bandages, herbs, and other things she would need to treat the young man's injuries.

"She also had one of these chief," Ruffnut said to get Stoick's attention.

Turning to her, she saw that she was holding a strange metal object in her hand. It was almost like a star. It was pointed and sharp on four sides with a small hole in the center. He had never seen a weapon like this before.

"A shuriken," Gobber gasped quietly.

Stoick turned to look at his friend and saw the way he was looking at the object. His eyes were wide and he had a look of recognition on his face. He had been getting the feeling that Gobber was hiding something. Deciding to call him out on it, he asked, "Something you know Gobber?"

"Well if you've wondering where Hicca has been for the last six years, then yes," Gobber said with a shrug. Seeing the chief glare at him, not amused by his deflecting the question, he elaborated. "She's been to the land of the rising sun."

The whole room remained silent. They had never heard of this place before. Most of the tribe never really traveled out of the waters of the archipelago. Gobber was an exception. He had been to many different lands in his youth.

"How do you know that? And what is this place?" Stoick asked inquisitively.

"It's a land very far from here," Gobber began. "It would take almost a year to get there by ship. Maybe a few months on dragon though," Gobber explained. "Back in the day I traveled all over. I went to many distant lands and met many different people. Though I never went to the land of the rising sun, or Japan, as it is also known, I've met sailors from there."

"And?" Stoick reiterated, wanting Gobber to get to the point.

"They used to tell me tales of specially trained warriors. Warriors of darkness and shadows. They are seen as demons. They uses weapons like those to kill people," Gobber said before pointing to the shuriken. "Ninja, as they are called, are masters of stealth and use their skills to assassinate, spy, and sabotage their enemies. I had my suspicions, but this confirms it. Hicca has become a ninja, a Kunoichi to be exact," he concluded.

The whole room took in what Gobber said. So that's where Hicca had been? In this land called Japan? And she was taught to kill people by these ninja? They almost couldn't believe how ridiculous it sounded. Yet they had seen the evidence to confirm the validity of Gobber's theory. She had defeated Ash, twice, and snuck into the village like it had been nothing, and the riders had witnessed firsthand how stealthy she could be. They suddenly all wondered how they would possible find her.

Meanwhile, Ash's mind was racing at what Gobber had said. _'Warriors of darkness and shadow'_, is what he had used to describe these ninja. His mind immediately went to the runes and predictions of the elder. _An 'old love'_. Hicca matched that perfectly. And now, she had come to match the second part as well. Ash was now more determined than ever to bring Hicca back. The runes were saying that they were meant to be. Though, runes be damned, Ash would've have wanted Hicca even without having heard them.

He prayed to the gods to let him recover faster. He had to find Hicca.

* * *

><p>Hicca sighed to herself as she walked through streets of NjÃ¶rÃ¶r Island. It had been week since her second fight with Ash, and after that fight she had come to a decision to leave the archipelago. She had spent several days island hopping and consoling her aching heart. She decided that the best choice of action would be to stop on NjÃ¶rÃ¶r Island to stock up on supplies and do some maintenance on Toothless's saddle.<p>

NjÃ¶rÃ¶r Island was an island that was home to the Haughty Haggler tribe. Unlike most tribes, the Hagglers were friendly to all of tribes. They were a neutral tribe who formed no allegiances with any other. But they stayed in the good graces of the other tribes by serving as a port city and resting spot to everyone traveling through the archipelago. They were a large tribe and their village was absolutely huge in comparison to Berk. Hicca had stopped on this island during her journey to Japan and had found work here. She managed to do so again by doing some menial tasks for the local smiths. She had camped in a cave at the rear of the island and left Toothless there while she came into town.

She had made quick work of making the repairs to his saddle and was now coming back with a sack of food over her shoulders. She wasn't in her ninja outfit, as she would stand out too much, and was wearing a green tunic with a fur vest and brown legging and boots. It was a lot like the outfit she had worn as a child, but she had gotten them custom made in Japan due to her growth spurt.

As she walked she wondered if leaving was what she should do. Would she never come back? Would she never see her father again? He obviously knew she was back, and apparently he wanted her back. Would she be hurting him by leaving? She wanted to not care about him, but she couldn't. The thought of breaking his heart left a heavy feeling of guilt on her heart.

She groaned as she paused in the street and looked up at the sky for an answer. She needed to get out of her head. Looking around, she saw

a sign for a tavern. Some alcohol might take her mind off her dilemma. Clothing her back of supplies tighter, she made her way toward the tavern.

Outside, she could hear men and women laughing and having a good time. Opening the door, she was met with a warm and jovial atmosphere as people, talked, drank, fought, and watched some performs on the stage at the far end of the room. She made her way over to the tavern bar and took a seat on the stool. When the tavern keeper asked her what she wanted, she simply said she'd take some mead. The keeper obliged and placed a mug down in front of her. She grabbed the mug and took a sip. Then she took a larger gulp and let the honey tasting liquid make it way down her throat. She started to relax after a few more gulps as her mind drifted away from her father and Berk.

She had a good life, she surmised. She was young, strong, pretty, and confident. She could go anywhere. Do anything she wanted. Suddenly she found she was in much higher spirits. With nothing to do but sit there, she fingered with her metal mug and focused on her hearing. She listened to the conversations of the people in the tavern with half interest.

Apparently one of the men was getting married tomorrow and his friends and he were mourning the end of his life. He chuckled to herself. Tuning in on another conversation she heard two serving girls talking amongst themselves. One of them was with child and very excited about being a mother. Her friend seemed to be just as giddy as she was. She started to wonder about these things for herself. If she did nothing but travel for the rest of her life and never settling down, she couldn't have kids, or get married. Despite her nontraditional path in life Hicca still wanted those things. She was still a Viking girl at heart.

She continued to listen in on the other patrons' conversations until one word in particular completely caught her interest. 'Hooligan'. Listening closely, she caught the conversation.

"I hear that the Hooligans are in for a surprise," said the gruff voice of a man.

"Really? What did you hear?" asked the voice of a different man.

"Siver the Scarred is supposed to be dispatching 30 of his ships to Berk," the man answered.

Hicca's eyes widened at this. There was that name again. Siver? Who was this person? Why was he going after Berk?

"Oh please. No one attacks Berk. They got them dragons," the other man scoffed. "How do you know this anyway?"

"Siver's men stopped at the port here to resupply. Talked to one of them," the man said nonchalantly.

Hicca's heart raced at hearing this news. The Hooligans were in danger. This Siver sounded like a dangerous character. Then she shook her head. It didn't matter to her anymore. She wasn't a Hooligan anymore.

"Well. I gotta an early start tomorrow at the docks. See ya later than boyo," the man said before getting up.

Hicca turned and saw large man with a great black beard get up from his table and saunter over to the door. He was armed with two swords across his back. A normal person wouldn't dare approach this imposing man. But Hicca wasn't normal by Viking standards. And try as she might, she needed to know more about this. Dropping her bag full of food she got up from the bar and placed a gold coin down on the table. She watched the man walk out the door. She waited a few moments before starting after him.

He had what she needed to know. She was going to have to get it from him. One way or the other.

* * *

><p>Olaf was making his way through the streets of Njǫrðr Island, on his way to his house. He hadn't a care in the world as he smelled the sea and the night was cool. This Siver fellow was either brave or stupid. He had heard of him, supposedly he wasn't anyone you'd want to meet and he apparently had some kind of grudge with Stoick the Vast. Stoick was a legend all throughout the archipelago, and Olaf chuckled as the man foolish enough to challenge him.<p>

Suddenly as he was walking, he heard the footsteps of someone behind him. He turned around to see if he was being followed, and to his surprise he saw no one. With a shrug he face forward and continued on his way. A moment later, he again heard the footsteps of a person following behind him. As quick as he could he whirled around. Again no one was there. He furrowed his brows in confusion. Was he just hearing thing?

With a frown he slowly turned around a kept walking. This time he heard no footsteps behind him. Shrugging an arm, he just assumed he was getting old and hearing things. Not like anyone would come after a man who was clearly armed. He didn't wear those swords on his back as a fashion statement.

Continuing on his way he stopped when out of the corner of his eyes he saw a figure standing in an alley. Turning his head in the direction of the alley, he saw that no one was there. Olaf was getting the feeling that someone was watching him. He knew he wasn't just going crazy, someone was tailing him. Facing forward he broke into a sprint. Breaking into a run, he quickly darted into an empty alley and drew his swords. Whoever was tailing him was going to get what was coming to him. He waited with his back toward the empty alley and his swords at the ready. He listened intently as he waited for his stalker to walk by looking for him.

After a few moments of waiting, he relaxed. Perhaps he had lost them? Or maybe they had simply determined he wasn't worth the trouble? Feeling safe, he put his swords away and stood up straight. As he was about to leave and continue on his way, something hit him in the back of the knees. With a shout of surprise he was forced to his knees. He was about to lash out at whatever had hit him from behind when he felt the cool touch of metal at his throat.

He raised his arms up as he realized that whoever was behind him had a knife at his throat.

"Move or shout for help and you die. Got it?" the person behind him said coolly.

His eyes widened as he heard what sounded like a woman threatening him. "What do you want lass? I ain't got much gold on me if you were hoping to buy yourself a pretty dress," he said with a sneer. At his response, the assailant pressed her knife into his neck. He hissed in pain as it bit into his skin.

"I just want answers and I'll be on my way," the assailant said.

"I don't know what you think I know lass."

"Tell me about the group that's after the Hooligans," the assailant demanded.

"I'm afraid I don't know too much about them. They go by the Scarred Ones. Siver the Scarred is their leader," he said with a light shrug.

"What's this Siver got against the tribe?" the assailant asked, pressing for more details.

"Hel if I know," Olaf replied.

"You're lying," the assailant said harshly. She pressed the blade harder into his skin. It was enough to break the skin and he felt a light trickle of blood run down his neck.

"Fine," Olaf growled. "There's supposed to be some kind of family feud between him and the chief. Been going on since their grandfathers. It will only end when one of their bloodlines is ended."

The woman didn't respond as she seemed to process this information. After a few moments of silence she asked another question, "You said the Hooligans are going to be attacked soon. How soon?"

"Can't say for sure. The company left sometime yesterday. They'll probably reach Berk by tomorrow morning. Maybe catch them by surprise," he said with a guess.

The woman paused behind him. Suddenly the blade at his neck was removed before he heard the figure take a step back. Olaf reached hand up to check his throat. He glanced over his shoulder only to find that no one was in the alley. Not even a trace of a footprint.

It was like no one was ever there.

* * *

><p>An hour later a figure flew from NjÃ¶r Island at blinding speed. The figure was completely invisible in the night sky, as was the person on its back. A woman sat atop the flying beast with her eyes full of fire.<p>

After hearing of Berk's impending attack, she had immediately ran back to Toothless and changed into her ninja gear. Then she saddled

him up and headed straight for Berk. She pushed Toothless as fast as he could go. She had to help. She owed them that at least.

She processed what she had learned. This Siver was after her father's head. And hers if she was discovered by him. She hadn't ever heard of a grudge her family carried with another. She had also never heard of the Scarred Ones.

She wondered how long this had been going on. Obviously this wasn't Berk's first attack, as Ash had accused her of being a spy of Siver.

"Come on hunny. We gotta help," she said to Toothless. He growled in agreement and picked up his speed. Both dragon and rider were preparing themselves for a fight.

* * *

><p>Captain Bjorn Bloodbane stood on deck of the lead ship as his company approached Berk. It was early morning and the sun had only just started to rise. They were going to take them unawares. They would kill as many as the Hooligans as they could and hopefully take the head of the chief. Killing Stoick the Vast was sure to make anyone a legend. Siver hated the man. He knew of his chief's grudge with the Stoick. The man was badly scarred from an encounter they had decade ago.<p>

Looking around, he saw some of the men sweating lightly. They were obviously worried about having to face the armies of dragons. "Quit your trembling you ninnyes. We're plenty armed and we got the element of surprise," he commanded the men. They were armed and prepared for dragons. Each ship had several catapults and the men were all carrying crossbows. There were also veteran dragon killer among them.

Looking back to Berk he smiled evilly. He licked his lips as he thought of the kind of plunder they could get. Gold, weapons, food, woman maybe. Bjorn had always been a twisted man. He took pleasure in the fact that his tribe still raided and pillaged. "Everyone get ready!" He called out to the ships. At his order, the men started getting into position and getting their weapons ready. Anytime now they would be close enough to be spotted. Hopefully they could get a few ships to the docks before the Hooligans could react.

As the men all waited anxiously a soft noise started to fill the air. It was like a whistling sound seemed to emanate from everywhere. Bjorn and his men all looked around in confusion as they tried to pinpoint the noise. Then it started getting louder and higher. Bjorn's eyes widened as he realized what it was. All Vikings new the call of the offspring of lightning and death. And they feared it.

"NIGHT FURY!" Bjorn shouted in terror.

"GET DOWN!" came shout from one of his men.

All the men hit the decks right as a ship to the far right was suddenly reduced to splinters. The ship was now useless and taking on water as a hole had been punched right through it. The men all looked up to see a black figure swooping over the ships. It rose into the

sky and disappeared before the familiar call of the demon was heard once again. Then another ship was destroyed.

Bjorn quickly began shouting orders to his men as he scanned the skies for the Fury. He prayed to the gods that he survive this day.

* * *

><p>"Good job hun'," Hicca called out to Toothless as they sank another ship. They had just managed to reach Berk when Hicca caught up to them. Immediately taking in their weapons, she attacked. With 30 ships she could only sink about a third of them with Toothless's fire. She was going to have to buy Berk time to notice the marauders' approach.<p>

Bringing Toothless into a dive she pulled up when she was at a height just a few feet over the ships. Adjusting the prosthetic she locked the tailfin open before slipping out of the stirrup and crouching on Toothless's back.

"Ok hun'," she said to get his attention. "I'm going down there to take out as many as I can. You continue to pass over and blast them," she called out. Toothless growled in confirmation. Hicca had a wide smile on her face as her heart pounded in excitement. "I've always wanted to do this," she said excitedly. Toothless snorted and rolled his eyes as he realized what Hicca meant. With that, Hicca leapt off Toothless and dived down toward the ships.

The men all watched as Toothless swooped over the ships before climbing and preparing to make another pass over them. Hicca caught the attention of the leader on the main ship with a shout. "DYNAMIC ENTRY!" The leader whirled around to see what had made the noise only to be met with the boots of Hicca slamming into his face. Hicca dropped kick the man in the face, sending him toppling over backwards.

Going over with him, Hicca rolled to disperse the force of the impact. Rolling forward, Hicca immediately got to her feet and drew her Ninjato before stabbing it into the stomach of a shocked man who had been standing behind the leader. Looking at the man's chest, she spotted familiar object hanging from a leather cord. It was a Viking war horn. Grabbing it, she gave it a sharp tug, breaking the clasp in the back.

Hearing a noise from behind her, she jerked her head to the left as a crossbow bolt flew by her head and embedded into the chest of man she had stabbed. Pulling out her Ninjato, she sheathed it before drawing her kunai from its holster and whirling around to throw it into the man's eye. The man had no time to dodge as he had been busy trying to reload his crossbow. He screamed in pain as the knife lodged itself into his eye. Hicca then threw her leg back, kicking the end of the crossbow bolt and sending it into the man's heart. He died immediately.

There were two more crew member left on the ship. Redrawing her Ninjato she watched and waited for them to attack.

Both men looked at her with caution. They were obviously worried about what she was capable of. As they looked ready to charge her,

Toothless suddenly passed overhead and grabbed one by the shoulders. The man shouted in terror as he was lifted off the ship before being dropped into the ocean. The man's companion watched in shock. Then he realized he shouldn't be taking his eyes off his opponent. That would be a lesson he would learn too late as Hicca ran up to him and slashed at his throat.

Turning away from the man as he died, she sheathed her Ninjato once more and pulled down her mask. In her left hand was still the Viking war horn. Taking a deep breath, she put her lips to it and blew as hard as she could.

* * *

><p>Stoick burst out of the front door of his house. He had woken up early as usual to start his chief duties when he heard a familiar sound in the distance. It was a Viking war horn. Looking around he saw some sailors looking out over the ocean with a spy glass.<p>

"What going on?" Stoick shouted while approaching them.

"Ships chief. We believe more of Siver's men," one of the sailors answered.

"How many ships are there?" he asked next.

"Thirty sir. But it looks as if some of them are on fire sir. It looks like they're being attacked by a dragon," the man said in confusion.

Stoick immediately came over and swiped a spyglass from one of the men. Looking through it, he was astonished to see that at least five of the ships were on fire. Suddenly he saw another ships suddenly go up in flames before he saw a black dot zoom by.

Could it be? He thought to himself with a gasp. Quickly he turned to issue orders to the villagers. "Sound the alarms. Get everybody armed and ready. And mobilize the riders!" he shouted to his tribesman. They all nodded and ran to obey his orders.

Looking out at the ships again, Stoick's stomach churned with worry. He could feel that it was his daughter out there. She was fighting to protect Berk. He prayed to the gods that she be ok. Hey prayed that she would come home.

* * *

><p>After Hicca blew the horn a few time and was satisfied that someone on Berk had probably heard it, she dropped and turned her attention to the remaining ships. She ran to the man who still had her kunai in his eye and grasped it by the handle before yanking it out. The man's scream of pain was cut short by her slitting his throat with her kunai. Now that the entire crew was dead she had to move onto the next ship. Quickly she ran to one of the catapults that happened to be facing toward the direction of the other ships. She loaded herself into the bucket before kicking the handle.<p>

The catapult immediately sent her flying through the air and to another ship. As she was coming down onto the next ship, she was

headed right for a crew member. The man stared up at her in surprise and froze. Hicca rammed her elbow into his collarbone as she finally came down. With his collar bone shattered he went to the ground screaming in pain. The other crew members prepared to advance on her. She sheathed her Ninjato before pulling out her Kusarigama.

She equipped her weapon and began swinging the weight around as she waited for the men to attack. There were five. Three had long swords, one had a battle-axe, and one was pointing a crossbow at her. The man with the crossbow fired at her first. She jerked her head to the side and dodged the bolt. Then she threw the weight and chain at the man. Aiming for his crossbow, the chain wrapped around it and with a quick jerk, she yanked it from his grip. She tugged hard on the chain and let it sail behind her, tossing the crossbow into the ocean before yanking the chain back to her left hand. The man stood in shock at having been disarmed.

One of the other men standing to her left came at her with a sword. He attempted to decapitate her with a powerful horizontal slash that she ducked. Then she swung her sickle into the man's stomach before dragging it across the mad stomach and out of side. The man was shocked at his sudden disembowelment and fell to his knees.

Hicca stepped around the man and swung her chain at the next closest crew member. The weight struck the man in the side of the face and knocked him unconscious. He went down in a heap as she prepared to attack the next crew member. The one with the battle axe was about to charge her when she swung the sickle end of her weapon out at him. The sickle buried itself into the man neck before she yanked on the chain and opened a deep gash as it severed his carotid artery and he began bleeding out.

Shaking the blood off her weapon she reequipped her sickle in her right hand and waited for the next attack. The men were frozen on the spot as they took in how easily she had killed their crew members. As they stood their Toothless passed over the ship and grabbed one of them by the shoulders and carried him off the deck before dropping him in the ocean. Now the last man standing, the man who had been holding the crossbow looked absolutely terrified.

Hicca glared at him in challenge. Daring him to attack. The man was absolutely not willing to risk his life and threw himself overboard. Hicca smiled to herself and relaxed. Putting away her weapon, a gleam from one of the men's bodies caught her eye. Examining the body, she saw a medallion on the man. The medallion had a symbol on it. Strangely, the symbol was familiar to her. Something about it didn't make sense. Yanking the medallion off the man, she pocketed it for later.

Suddenly she heard footsteps behind her. Turning around, she saw that the man she had knocked unconscious had come around and had his sword at the ready. Hicca raised her hand to grasp the handle of her Ninjato. Preparing to draw it, should he attack. But then, just as it looked like he was going to attack, he was suddenly riddled with yellow spikes that came from the air. He fell to the floor in pain. Hicca looked up to where the spikes had come from and saw a familiar Deadly Nadder hovering above the ship. Atop the Nadder was a familiar blonde Viking. Meeting his eyes, Hicca glared at him. She hadn't needed his help.

Looking around, she noticed that more dragons had arrived and were attacking the remaining ships. She could make out her former peers on their dragons and some other rider's she couldn't immediately distinguish. With the cavalry arrived Hicca decided she was no longer needed. Jumping into a bucket of one of the ship's catapults she kicked the handle and went sailing through the air. She whistled for Toothless who quickly swooped under her, allowing her to land back in the saddle and retake control of the tailfin.

Adjusting the prosthetic, she turned away to fly off when suddenly a figure came up from below and hovered directly in front of her.

"Hicca wait!" Fishlegs cried atop his Gronkle.

Hicca scowled at him. "Get out of the way Fishlegs!" she commanded.

"Hicca please come back to Berk," Fishlegs begged. "Everyone misses you and we could really use your help," he continued.

Hicca snorted in disbelief at that. The entire tribe to once hate her suddenly wanted her back. That was rich. "Last chance Fishlegs. Out of the way," she said in warning.

Fishlegs paled at her mild threat but he and his dragon remained in their spot. Suddenly her formers peers came up and hovered around her in a circle. She cursed at letting herself be surrounded.

"Fishlegs is right cuz. Just come home," Snotlout said.

"Shut up Snotlout!" Hicca yelled at her cousin with nostrils flaring. "Fishlegs is the only one of you I don't hate. So I'll be talking to him if you don't mind," she said turning to glare at the others. They all stared wide eyed but kept their mouths shut. "Fishlegs, how long have you been getting attacked?" she asked inquisitively.

"A little over four months now," Fishlegs replied. "They attack at random and their numbers have been getting bigger and bigger each time. This is why we need you Hicca," Fishlegs said desperately.

Hicca took in all the information. She closed her eyes to think of what she should do. Apart of her wanted to leave all of this behind. She had helped them and saved the village in the past. She didn't owe them anything anymore. And yet, she couldn't just turn her back on them. It simply wasn't her way.

With a sigh, she opened her eyes and looked to Fishlegs. "Alright fine. I'll help until this is over."

Fishlegs eyes lit up with happiness. "Really? You'll help? You'll come back to Berk?" He asked in excitement.

"Yes," she grumbled with a nod.

Fishlegs cheered in happiness, as did the rest of her formers peers. With the attack done and the ships now smoldering piece of wood. The riders and Hicca set off towards Berk. Hicca flew near the back. Her stomach churning with nervousness. She was going to see her father.

And this time he would be awake.

Toothless crooned at having sensed her anxiety. She smiled to him and patted him on the head. "I'm ok hun'. Just a little nervous," she said to reassure him. With that, he turned his head back in the direction of Berk.

* * *

><p>Stoick watched as the riders flew back to Berk. He counted them off and sighed in relief as he saw they were all accounted for. Then he furrowed his brows in confusion as he counted an extra dragon. As all the riders got closer, his heart stopped as he saw that the extra dragon was completely black. He ran to the center of town as he saw the riders spiral down to land there.<p>

When he got there, a large crowd had gathered. They were surrounding the riders and there was a great murmur going through all of them. Pushing his way through crowd, he made his way to the front. When he got there, his breath caught in his throat. "I don't believe my eyes!" he whispered to himself.

There, standing in the center of the crowd was his little girl, and behind her was her black dragon. Stoick suddenly became deaf and blind to his surrounding as all he could focus on was his little girl. She had grown. She had gotten a little taller and she matured. She was no longer a little girl, but a young woman. She looked strong and healthy. Stoick couldn't help but be reminded of his wife. She looked so much like her. She always had.

Finally coming back to reality, Stoick slowly started approach. The whole village went silent and watched their chief approach his long lost child. As he got closer, Hicca finally took notice of him and her eyes widened slightly. Finally he reached her and loomed over her. They held each other's gaze as Stoick tried to find his voice. Here she was, finally she was right in front of him. He was suddenly hit by the overwhelming urge to embrace her. He wanted to scoop her up into his arms and tell her how much he had missed her and how sorry he was for the past.

As he was contemplating doing just that, Hicca took a step back and turned away from him before crossing her arms over her chest. "Stoick. It's good to see you," she said blankly.

Stoick hid the hurt at her frosty attitude. Finally finding his voice he spoke as well, "Hicca, it's good to see you too. You've grown I see," he pointed out awkwardly.

"Yeah. I hit a growth spurt when I turned 17. Still won't be a giant anytime in the future but I'm pretty happy with the way I am," she answered.

Stoick could sense a jab meant for him in her tone. "Well I'm glad you're home," he said honestly.

Hicca snorted. "This isn't my home. I've just come to help you guys out Stoick. It's the least I can do for all the trouble I caused as a kid," he replied shortly.

"Why do you keep calling me 'Stoick', as if I'm some

stranger?"

Hicca chuckled dryly. "We were strangers long before I left Stoick. And I'm not the same person I used to be. Calling you 'dad' just doesn't feel right," he replied with a scowl, still not looking at Stoick.

Stoick was stung by that comment. It hurt more knowing that it was true. Stoick had made them strangers all those years ago by always putting her at the bottom of his priorities. "Hicca I understand that you're probably mad at me, but this is your home. We're your tribe," he said in earnest.

"Am I?" Hicca asked rounding on him. "Because if my memory is correct, you disowned me, and exiled me," she said with a glare.

Stoick's eyes widened as he remembered the events that happened when he had discovered her dragon. How could he have done that to her? He mentally cursed himself. "Yes, but on Dragon Island," Stoick began, trying to remind her of their reconciliation.

"That's not how the laws of Berk work Stoick," Hicca said cutting him off. "An order of exile can only be repealed on Berk. Then that person has to be reintroduced to the tribe," she continued. "Plus, now that I've been gone for so long the elders will have to make a majority vote to approve of me rejoining the tribe," she finished. She looked into Stoick's surprised eyes and smirked. "Don't look so surprised Stoick. I may have been the next chief one day. I memorized all the laws of Berk," she explained.

Stoick sighed in defeat. Hicca was right. His order of exile still technically stood. He wanted to kick himself for what he had done all those years ago. Even if he had taken it back, the damage had still been done. "You're right. But we can fix that, I can speak with the elders. I'm sure I canâ€", " Stoick began before Hicca interrupted.

"Save it Stoick. I'm here to help and once this is over I'll decide what I want to do with my life," she said harshly. "Besides, I don't know I want to be part of a tribe who would make an outcast of someone just because they were different. Or be the daughter to a man who was more concerned about a chief than being a father," she added vehemently.

Stoick's shoulder's dropped in defeat. There was nothing he could do. He realized that sending the riders to bring he back had been a mistake. Hicca wasn't a little girl anymore. She was a young woman with her own mind. He couldn't tell her what to do. All he could do was show her that he had changed and hopefully she could be convinced to stay of her own free will.

"Very well. You will stay as my guest then. You're free to use you're old room," he offered.

Hicca held his gaze for a moment longer before turning away. "I'll camp at the cove. Come on hun'," she said stepping around Stoick with her dragon in tow. The crowd parted for her as she passed.

Stoick watched her go feeling utterly helpless. He cursed himself for

all he had done. He had thought that if he ever saw Hicca again, the reconciliation would go a lot better. But at this point, it didn't even seem like Hicca would accept an apology. He knew that she had a right to be angry at him.

Still, Stoick the Vast was never one to give up. He had prayed to the gods for a chance to see his only child again, and through their graces of some other twist of fate, he had been given a second chance. He wouldn't let it slip through his fingers. He would find a way to convince her to stay. He would show her that he wasn't that same cold hearted man from all those years ago. He would show her that he loved her. They would be a family again.

It would take time. It would take effort. But he was a Viking. They didn't run away from a challenge.

* * *

><p>As Hicca made her way to the forest, her mind was completely focused on her father. She was mad at him. Mad at him for the way he had ignored her for years. Mad at him for disowning her and then exiling her. Then he had the gall to say that this was her home. That the villagers suddenly considered her as member of the tribe.<p>

She was so caught up in her thoughts that she didn't hear the footsteps of someone approaching her from behind. Then when a hand grabbed onto her shoulder, she quickly shook it off before drawing her Ninjato and pointing it at her 'attacker'. It was Ash. His eyes were wide and his hands were up in surrender.

Hicca glared at him before saying, "Don't ever touch me again without my permission." When he nodded in understanding, she put away her sword and he relaxed. She faced him and crossed her arms over her chest. She stared at him blankly, waiting for him to say what he wanted.

Rubbing the back of his neck awkwardly, Ash tried to think of something to say. "I'm glad you've decided to stay," he said lamely. _Damn it man. Is that all you got?_

"I'm glad to see your bruises have healed up nicely," she said with a smirk.

Ash flushed in embarrassment. "Well. I guess I'll go. I'll see you around I guess?" he asked trying to sound casual.

"I'll just be coming into town to check on the situation. But yeah I guess," She said with a light shrug.

Ash nodded before turning around and walking back to the village. She watched him go with a sigh. He was still so attractive to her. She shook her head. _I'm just here to help the village. Then Toothless and I will be on our way_, she told herself with conviction.

With that she turned around and directed Toothless to follow. Toothless could sense the conflict within his rider. He hoped that she would be ok.

* * *

><p>Here she come to save the day! Hope yuo liked.

10. Chapter 10

****Girl got skills****

Hicca awoke as the sun started to rise. After coming into the cove and making camp, she and Toothless had eaten some of their rations before sleeping for the remainder of yesterday. They were pretty tired after having flown all night to catch up with the Scarred Ones. Stretching and releasing a yawn, she got out of her sleeping bag and got to her feet as quietly as she could to not wake Toothless. She made her way over to the saddle bags with their supplies and pulled out a canteen of water. She opened it and took a few big gulps to refresh and hydrate herself.

She looked up to the sky and smiled. Despite her conflicted feeling for the tribe it felt good to be back on Berk. She heard Toothless arouse himself from sleep behind her and yawn. Turning around, she smiled at him and walked over to pet his head. Toothless uncurled himself and rose up to meet her. He warbled at her in good morning and leaned into her touch.

"Come on hun', time for some training," Hicca told him. Toothless grumbled lightly at this. He'd rather go for a flight. "Come on Toothless. I don't want to get rusty. I can't let all those six years go to waste now can I?" she asked him sweetly. Toothless huffed in defeat and nodded. Hicca kissed him on the head and started grabbing her and Toothless's gear.

* * *

><p>Stoick walked around the village doing his chiefly duties. His mind was mainly on what happened yesterday with Siver's men. He thanked the gods that Hicca had been there to warn them and fight off the marauders. He was frustrated that they couldn't manage to capture one for questioning. Anyone who was about to be captured would swallow poison before they could be subdued. They were nowhere closer to finding Siver. Stoick had immediately assigned a watch to the waters so that they wouldn't be taken by surprise once again.<p>

Besides his thoughts of Siver he was also thinking a lot about Hicca. He was glad she was back despite her cold attitude towards him and the village. Though he guessed he couldn't blame her. He was amazed about how much she had changed. Not just physically, but mentally as well. There was defiance in her eyes along with a fearlessness. The way she walked was different too. The old Hicca walked with her eyes down and tried not to be seen. Constant bullying and other form of harassment would do that to a person. But the new Hicca walked with confidence and with her head held high, not caring who saw her.

It took all Stock's restraint to attend to his chiefly duties when he first woke up. Now that he had some free time and nothing needed immediate attention he casually started making his way to forest to pay her a visit.

"Morning chief," came the voice of Gobber behind him. Stoick quickly

turned around and looked into the smirking face of his longtime friend. "Going somewhere?" he asked, already knowing where Stoick had been heading.

"Oh uhm Gobber. I was just going into the woods to check on our guest is all," he said, trying to sound professional.

Gobber's smirk only grew. "Worried about your little girl Stoick?" Gobber said playfully.

"No. She can take care of herself. But as my guest it's my duty as chief to make sure she's properly situated. Gotta make sure she has everything she needs. Like food, or an extra blanket, and all that," the chief answered weakly.

"You're wasting your time Stoick," Gobber told him nonchalantly.

His words stung Stoick. He released a sigh and cast his gaze down to the floor. "Maybe I am Gobber. But I have to try. I prayed to the gods for a second chance with my daughter and now I have it," the chief said quietly.

To his surprise Gobber just laughed. He was confused as to why his friend was laughing at his family problems when the smith walked over and clapped him on the shoulder. "No Stoick I mean you're wasting your time because she's not at the cove. She's at the old kill ring," Gobber explained.

"Oh," the chief said in understanding.

"Most of the village has gone to watch what she's doing and I was on my way there too. Why don't we both go," Gobber offered. At the chief's nod they started making their way to the academy. "Oh and by the way, I think you should keep trying. Even if it doesn't seem like it, she wants you to. You're her father after all," Gobber said offering his advice.

Stoick processed what Gobber said and nodded.

At the kill ring, most of the village had gathered to see what their long lost heiress was up to. Rumors had gone around that Hicca had been trained to kill by warriors from a distant land. Many of them found it hard to believe. They had known Hicca since she was a kid. She had never been a warrior. Now they looked down into the kill ring from above and waited for her to do something.

Stoick walked up to the top of the kill ring and joined the riders who were in a group. Coming up to them, he glanced into the kill ring and saw that Hicca and her dragon were just sitting in the center.

"What going on?" he asked the riders.

"Not sure chief. Hicca has just been sitting there since we got here. She's been ignoring us," Fishlegs answered not taking her eyes off Hicca.

Stoick looked down to his daughter. She was wearing a green tunic like the one she had when she was a child and brown pants. There looked to be a black belt tied around her waist and she was barefoot.

She was sitting cross-legged in the middle of the ring in a relaxed posture while she breathed steadily and her eyes were closed. Her dragon was sitting on his rear, body relaxed, breath steady, and his eyes closed as he mimicked his rider's actions.

"Meditating," Gobber said quietly.

Suddenly Hicca opened her eyes and stood up. Toothless having detected his rider's movement also started to move and dropped down on all fours. Then Hicca started stretching. She stretched both her arms and even used Toothless to stretch out her legs. Then she laid across Toothless's neck to stretch her back. After a few minutes of stretching, and showing the village her amazing flexibility Hicca walked to a wall of the kill ring and picked up circular pouch. Attaching it to the waistline of her pants she walked back to the center of the ring.

Stoick then noticed the five targets set up around the ring. They were barrels on top of barrels with circular targets painted on them. They watched as Hicca looked to each one. Then Hicca paused for a moment before she quickly reached behind her into the pouch and threw her shuriken and kunai at the targets in quick succession. The crowd watched in amazement as the projectiles hit the bull's eye each time. Once Hicca was out of shuriken and kunai, she walked to the barrels and removed them. Then she looked to Toothless and gestured to the targets. Toothless nodded in understanding before nudging each of the barrels into a new position.

Once they were set, he huffed and came to sit behind Hicca. Once again Hicca threw her projectiles at the targets, hitting the bull's eye every time. Hicca and Toothless repeated this process several more times until Hicca changed it up.

Untying the belt at her waist, she used it to blindfold herself. Then she turned her back on the barrels and concentrated. After moment of concentration she whirled around and threw her projectiles. Everyone watched in amazement as almost all of them hit the bull's eye. All except once which hit the stone wall behind the barrels. Hicca removed the blindfold and frowned in annoyance. Collecting all her projectile once again she walked in front of the barrels and gestured to Toothless. Toothless stood between her and the barrel and huffed when he was ready. The crowd was intensely curious at what Hicca had in mind.

Toothless crouched low as he waited for Hicca. Then Hicca ran toward Toothless. When she got to him she stepped on his head and he threw her into the air. Turning in midair and twisting, she threw her projectiles at the barrels and hit the bull's eye once again. Landing in a crouch, Hicca looked up at the barrels and smiled proudly. The crowd was even more amazed by the incredible show of accuracy and precision.

With that, Hicca collected her projectile and put them away. Looking to Toothless once more she pointed up to the chains above the kill ring. He nodded and crouched low again. She charged him again and he gave her a leg up with his head and tossed her into the air. She grabbed onto the chain. She then quickly hung herself upside down with the chains by her feet. Hanging vertically, Hicca took a breath and put her hand behind her head. She then started bending her upper body up as she started doing crunches. Sweat started to come off her

in buckets as she concentrated on her form and pace.

The crowd was thoroughly impressed. Hicca was obviously in fantastic shape. They continued to watch as Hicca several repetitions of 30. Once Hicca deemed she was done she unhooked her feet and fell. When she landed, she stumbled a little and fell to her knees. Then she fell onto her hands and panted in exhaustion. Stoick was about to rush into the ring with a canteen when her dragon ran up to her and placed one at her side. Hicca turned and smiled to her companion before taking the canteen, uncapping, it and taking several big gulps.

Hicca stood up, feeling better. She smiled to Toothless in thanks. "Thanks hun'. Must be getting out a shape," she said with a light chuckle. With that, she took a breath. Then she back flipped and somersaulted in the direction of a barrel. With a final spring she pushed off the ground and landed in a handstand at the top of the barrel. Then gritting her teeth she lowered herself down before pushing herself back up, with her body fully vertical.

That is so hot. Ash thought to himself as he watched Hicca perform her handstand pushups. He couldn't believe how strong she was. Her small body was deceptively stronger than it looked. A fact he had felt firsthand.

As Hicca did her handstand pushups she felt the familiar burn of her muscles. It had been some time since she exercised. Sweat was pouring off her as she continued her reps. After a few more reps of 20 pushups she was satisfied that she had done enough. She leaned her body to the side and stood up straight. She brushed hair out her face as it collected against her sweaty brow. Then she scratched Toothless on the chin and smiled to him. He looked up at her expectantly

"Yes bud. We can go flying now. Then we'll get you some fish," she said to his delight. Crouching, she mounted and he darted out of the ring before taking off into the air.

The village watched her go and looked at her in a new light. She was definitely not the Hicca she used to be. She was stronger. And if her accuracy with her projectiles was always as good as they had seen, deadly even.

Ash stared after her. If he thought he had been attracted to Hicca before, he knew for sure he was now. She was amazing. Gods, he wanted her so badly. He knew he had to think of a way to impress her.

* * *

><p>It was hours later and the riders, excluding Ash, were seated at a table in the great hall. They were animatedly talking about Hicca. They couldn't believe how cool she had become. They all wondered what kind of training she had gone through all those years in Japan. They all started wondering of Hicca would be willing to teach them some of her fighting style.<p>

"Hey guys," Ash said entering the hall and walking to their table. They all greeted him as he joined them. "What's everyone talking about?"

"We were just talking about how amazing Hicca is," Fishlegs

said.

"Yeah man. She's awesome," Tuffnut added in agreement.

All this talk about Hicca was ruining Ash's mood. It just reminded him about how aloof she was to his presence. He wanted them to be closer. He wished he was more open about his feelings, but that wasn't the Viking way. They were a gruff and hard shelled people. And Ash who had always strived to be the epitome of a Viking really had his work cut out for him.

"Afternoon all," said Stoick as he and Gobber walked up to their table. They all greeted the chief as he approached them. "Has anyone seen Hicca?" Stoick asked with mild concern.

Now that Ash thought about it. He hadn't seen her either. He grew a little concerned. He hoped that she hadn't left.

"Oh I saw her about an hour ago chief. I invited her to have some lunch," Fishlegs responded.

This set both Ash's and Stoick's mind at ease. They had assumed the worst. Then, as if on cue, the door to the great hall opened and Hicca walked in. She was wearing her ninja outfit again and her face and hair looked as if it had been washed. Toothless was following loyally behind. As she came in and looked around the room her gaze finally rested on the group. Suddenly her face was lit up in a genuine smile as she seemed to be looking at Stoick.

Suddenly she dashed forward with her arms open. Stoick was surprised by the action. But he overcame his shock and spread his arms open. He assumed Hicca had forgiven him by her expression. Stoick became very disappointed as Hicca went right passed him and hugged Gobber instead. Stoick coughed and dropped his arms, feeling like an idiot.

"Oh my gods Gobber!" Hicca cried in glee. She was genuinely happy to see Gobber. He had been one of the few people who had ever been kind to her. "I'm so happy to see you!"

Gobber smiled and laughed. He patted her on the head and smiled, "I'm happy to see you Hicca. I see you've become a ninja," he added impressed.

Hicca's eyebrows raised in surprise at his knowledge of what she was. "How do you know about ninjas?" she asked, truly curious.

"Don't be so surprised lass. I'm Gobber, I've seen and heard quite a few things in my day," he explained. "You know poor ol' Gobber has had quite the workload all these years without his favorite apprentice. How about you stop by the forge and help your old mentor out. I'd also like to get a look at those weapons of yours," he added. As a smith, he was truly curious about the designs and smithing techniques of other lands.

Hicca nodded in acceptance. Taking a step back she walked around Stoick without acknowledging him. He caught this and felt a stab of pain.

"Hey Fishlegs, thanks for inviting me," she said coming up to

Fishlegs and giving him a friendly smile.

"No problem Hicca. Here, I thought you might be hungry," he said while holding up a full plate of food.

Hicca accepted it with a grateful smile. "Aww thank you Fishlegs, that's so sweet of you. I'm starving." Fishlegs smile back warmly and accepted her thanks.

Ash was scowling from the other end of the table at his friend. Out of all the riders, Fishlegs got on Ash's nerves the least. While he was occasionally a coward and annoying, he was competent and mature, unlike Snotlout and the twin. But at this moment Ash had never wanted to punch Fishlegs in the face more than in his entire life. He was extremely jealous at the genuinely warm smile Hicca was giving him. He also cursed himself for not thinking about offering Hicca some food.

Stoick sighed and walked off. He decided to give her some time and try again another day. Gobber felt sorry for his friend and followed after him.

Hicca took the plate and moved to another table out of habit. Sitting down she clapped her hands together and bowed her head. "Itadakimasu," she said. A habit she had retained from her stay in Japan. Toothless came and laid down behind her.

The others watched her for a moment before they moved over to her table. She let them do as they pleased as she continued eating her fish and bread.

"So Hicca, I was wondering," Ruffnut said taking a seat to her right. When Hicca looked to her to see what she wanted she continued. "I was wondering if you could teach me how to throw those Shuriken things," she said hopefully.

Hicca considered Ruffnut's proposition. It was forbidden for her to teach outsiders their clans fighting style and techniques. But anyone could learn how to throw shuriken, so it shouldn't be a big deal. "Sure I guess," she paused as she thought of something. "Do you happen to have the one I threw in the forest?" she asked. When Ruffnut nodded in confirmation she said, "Good. Get Gobber to make you some more just like it, and then I'll teach you when they're ready. Sound good?" she offered.

Ruffnut beamed in excitement. She had been amazed by the strange weapons. She was really looking forward to learning how to use them.

"I was hoping you could teach me a little about the culture of Japan," Fishlegs said cutting in. He was seated to her left and smiling hopefully. "Do they have dragons?" he asked excitedly.

Hicca turned to him and chuckled at his enthusiasm. "No, they don't. It's strange because they're in the myths and legends of Japan. I spent a few weeks looking for any signs of them and turned up nothing," she said scowling at the last part.

"How about me cuz?" Snotlout piped in. "Could you teach me some fighting techniques?" he asked as he sat across from her.

"I can show you something I guess," she said vaguely with a shrug.

"How about me?" Tuffnut asked sitting to Snotlout's left.

Hicca nodded and gave another shrug. Ash watched from the other table as all the other had started making arrangement to spend time with Hicca. He knew that this could be his way in. If he spent time with her and they got reacquainted, then maybe he could win her over.

Getting up from his seat at the original table, he made his way over to where the others were sitting. He tried to approach as casually as he could. He then took a seat to Snotlout's right. "So Hicca," he began, getting her attention. She looked up from her food at him and waited. "I was hoping we could train or exercise together sometime," he said as nonchalantly as he could.

Hicca frowned at him and narrowed her eyes. "I'm busy then," she said.

"But I didn't say when I wanted to train," Ash retorted.

"You're right Ash. When would we train?" she asked with false interest. As Ash opened his mouth to speak, Hicca cut him off, "I'm busy then."

Ouch. Ash thought, getting the point. Obviously Hicca was trying to make it clear that she wanted nothing to do with him. This was going to be harder than he thought.

When Hicca finished her meal she got up and thanked Fishlegs with a smile. She mentioned going to go see if she could help Gobber with anything. She then said goodbye to everyone, except Ash, and made her way to the doors of the great hall with Toothless on her heels. As she walked off, Ash watched her go. When she finally exited the hall, he released a disappointed sigh.

"OH MAN! You got shot down so hard," Tuffnut said with a laugh.

Ash turned to glare at the male twin. All of his friend were chuckling at his expense. It seemed Hicca had forgiven all the riders except for him.

Definitely not going to be easy, he thought with a frown.

* * *

><p>Ash left the great hall a few minutes after Hicca left. With no classes scheduled that day he decided to go on patrol with Stormfly. As he and his dragon circled the island on the lookout for enemy ships Ash was trying to think of way to get Hicca to warm up to him. Hicca was ignoring him completely at the moment. Not that he blamed her. He had done the same thing to her for about a decade when they were kids.<p>

He sighed at knowing that he was going nowhere fast with his attempts to earn Hicca's affection. He hadn't thought it would be this hard. Finishing his patrol shift, he head back to the village. He landed in

front of his house and unsaddle Stormfly before stabling her. As he was about to step inside his house he noticed villagers running in the direction of the academy. They seemed excited as they whispered about what was going on.

When Ash caught Fishlegs headed in the same direction he called out to him and asked him what was happening.

"Well I was with Gobber and Hicca at the forge, asking about some of her weapons from Japan when some of the villagers took notice. Anyway a whole bunch of villagers have challenged Hicca to a fight wanting to see what her weapons are capable of," he explained.

Ash's eyes widened. At hearing this. He tore off toward the academy. He was worried about Hicca. While he had witnessed firsthand what she was capable of in a fight, he hated the thought of her getting injured.

As he reached the academy, he saw a large crowd of villagers gathered all around the ring. They were cheering and throwing their hands up as they called for a fight. Vikings loved to watch a good fight. Ash looked down into the ring to see Hicca and her opponent. It was a large man by the name of Calder. He was in his late twenties and he was a pretty good fighter. He seemed confident he was a shoe in to win as he pounded his fist into his palm and stared Hicca down.

As Ash looked at Hicca, he saw that she was completely relaxed despite facing a man at least twice her size. She rolled her eyes while her arms were crossed over her chest as she stared analyzed her opponent. Both were currently unarmed and Ash assumed that this was a hand to hand fight.

Sitting in his chair above the ring, Stoick was as worried as Ash was. He considered calling off these fights, not that he didn't understand his people's excitement. They were warriors and they loved testing themselves against a new opponent. And Hicca was trained by warriors from another land at that. If it had been anyone besides his daughter, Stoick probably would have jumped at the opportunity to test his skills. But this was his daughter. He didn't want to see her get hurt. He also didn't want to have to beat the man who would dare harm a hair on her head.

In the ring, Gobber stood out of the way with a wagon full of weapons. Hicca's weapons. He was interested to see what she could do with them.

The riders came to stand beside Ash right as Stoick shouted for the match to begin. They all watched anxiously as Calder put his fists up and circled Hicca. They watched as Hicca didn't even get into a battle stance. They wondered how she could be so relaxed. After he made a full circle around her, Calder came to stand in front of her. Tensing up, Ash could tell he was about to swing. Then as quick as he could, Calder threw a right cross at Hicca's face.

Everyone watched as Hicca didn't make a move to dodge the blow. They thought for sure she would be struck. Then just as his fist almost collided against her face, Hicca ducked under his arm and swung up with her right hand and hit Calder underneath his arm, a little near the armpit. They wondered what kind of counterattack that was when suddenly Calder just rocked backwards and collapsed. The whole crowd

went silent as they tried to process what happened. Hicca had just knocked out Calder with one strike. What had she done?

"A nerve strike," Fishlegs whispered in awe. When his friends all looked at him in question, he explained. "Hicca told me that ninja have an intricate knowledge of the human anatomy. One of the ways they fight is to strike at vulnerable nerves located all throughout the body," he said.

The others stared at him with wide eyes before turning back to the ring. Hicca stood there looking proud. They watched as couple of Viking came into the ring and carried Calder out.

"Who's next?" Hicca called out in challenge as she looked up to crowd. It had been fairly simple to take down Calder. She just waited for him to throw a punch and then stricken him on the axillary nerve under his arm. She was eager to show them what she could do. She was going to make everyone who had called her weak eat their words.

When Calder was finally removed from the ring another Viking stepped into the ring. He was equipped with a hatchet and he was walking with confidence. Taking in the new opponent, Hicca turned around and walked to the weapon's cart by Gobber. Rummaging through it she picked out a weapon and made her way back to her opponent. Stoick shouted for the match to begin again and the two combatants began to circle each other.

"What the heck is that?" Snotlout asked.

Ash was wondering the same thing as he looked at Hicca's selected weapon. It looked like two sticks linked together by a chain. He wondered how it was used when Hicca suddenly grasped both sticks in her hand. He gasped as Hicca then began to spin and twirl it at blinding speeds all around her body. She would loop it behind her back and under her arms.

"Nunchaku," Fishlegs whispered. They all looked to him again. "Those weapons are called Nunchuks or Nunchaku. They're used to strike the opponent and the complex movements make it hard to predict the attack," he explained.

Back in the ring the Viking facing Hicca was trying his best to follow the wild movement of Hicca's weapon. The spinning was confusing him. Deciding to strike, he swung at her right. Hicca spun to her left and swung the end of her Nunchaku at her opponents head. It smacked him in the side of his face, making his ears ring as he stumbled away. As he turned to face Hicca, she charged at him and swung her weapon upwards and into his chin. It struck him hard and he went down.

With another win, Hicca looked up to crowd and shouted, "Next." Then she waited for some people to carry out their comrade before two more Vikings, armed with swords sauntered in. Hicca walked back to the cart and came out with a spear. Or it looked like a spear but it had no spear head.

"Legs?" Ash asked, turning to the larger boy for an explanation.

"That's a bo staff. Its length extends the users reach and power

while allowing them to attack and defend simultaneously," he said.

Looking back to the ring, they saw that the match had already begun. The Vikings were on either side of Hicca with their weapons at the ready. But they couldn't find an opening to attack as Hicca spun the staff above her head, in front of herself, and behind her. They were astounded by the speed at which the staff spun. It was a blur.

Glancing at each other on either side of Hicca, the Viking nodded. Then at the same time they stepped forward to attack her. Placing her staff up onto her shoulder, Hicca swiftly turned in a circle. The ends of the staff caught both men in the sides of their heads. They were immediately rattled and shook their heads to clear the cobwebs.

Hicca capitalized on their state and took her staff firmly in both hands. Immediately she jabbed the man in front of her in the gut. He immediately stumbled back in pain and put a hand over his stomach. Then she whirled around and smacked the man behind her on his upper arm. The man yelped in pain as he rubbed the spot he had been struck. A welt was already beginning to form.

Spinning the staff in front of her she turned back to the man in front and immediately brought her staff down on his head. The man definitely regretted not wearing a helmet that day as he fell to the ground unconscious. Hicca twirled around and swung upward with her staff into the other man's chin. The man rubbed at his jaw as he took a step back.

As he was tasting blood in his mouth, Hicca grabbed her staff by the middle and smacked the right end into the side of the man's face. Then she quickly did the same thing to the other side. She repeated this several more times as the man couldn't react to defend himself. Then Hicca allowed the staff to slide down her hand until she clutched it at one end. Spinning on her heel to gain momentum she swung the staff as hard as she could across the man's face. He spun and went down hard.

Hicca simply called for the next opponent as they were carried out. In the next few rounds Hicca fought a man armed with a spear with weapons Fishlegs called Tonfa. Then was a man with a sword that she faced with two sickles called Kama. Then she used her Kusarigama and then lastly her sword.

Each time, Hicca won without receiving a scratch. The entire crowd was amazed by how she used her weapons with great dexterity. No one had any doubt in their mind anymore about Hicca being a warrior now.

"Next!" Hicca called out as she beat her last opponent.

After exchanging glances between themselves a group of ten Vikings leapt into the ring and surrounded Hicca. At this, Stoick had enough. He was about to stop the fight when he saw Hicca reach behind her and pull out some purple orbs. She saw Hicca smile mischievously as she waited for the men to come at her. When they all tensed up to charge her she threw the orbs down, covering the ring in a thick cloud of smoke. No one could see what was happening in the ring anymore. But

they could hear a struggle. They mostly heard grunts of pain from the men and what sounded like people falling to the floor. One by one they heard 10 bodies hit the floor. Then it was silent.

Then from the smoke Hicca emerged unscathed. She stood smiling in triumph as the crowd waited for the smoke to dissipate. When it finally did their jaws hit the floor at seeing all 10 men on the ground. They couldn't believe Hicca had beaten them all so easily. They continued to stare in silence until a clapping sound cut through the silence.

Hicca turned to see her father clapping and smiling down at her from his seat. "Well done Hicca," he called down to her, genuinely impressed. At his applause the rest of the village joined in. They had to admit that they were also impressed by her skill. She had proved she could hold her own with any of them.

Hicca looked down and hid a smile. She hadn't really cared about impressing anyone. She just wanted to make a point. But she had to admit that their praise and admiration felt good. She had done what she had set out to do in the beginning. Show everyone who call her weak that they were wrong about her. She felt like a weight had been lifted off her as she let go of her animosity toward the village slightly. It was still going to take a lot more to make her stay. But Berk was beginning to feel like home.

Standing outside of the ring and clapping with the crowd was Ash. Although he had been genuinely impressed by Hicca's skill, his heart had also sunk considerably. How, in the name of Thor was he going to impress her now? His skills seemed like nothing in comparison to hers. He racked his brain as he tried to find an idea.

Suddenly inspiration struck him. "Hey Fishlegs, when is the next dragon race?" he sked his friend, not looking away from Hicca.

"Tomorrow actually," Fishlegs answered.

Ash smiled to himself. Hicca loved dragons. This was how he could impress her. He could show her how skilled of a flyer he had become. He was the dragon racing champ after all. She would have to be impressed at his skills in the race.

Just you wait Hicca. You're not the only one who's learned some new things these six years.

* * *

><p>Poor Ash. Kinda what you get for being a jerk though. Let me know what ya think and hoped you like.

And to guest reviewer J.E.M...chill bruh, they're gonna hook up

11. Chapter 11

Mission Success. Mission Failed.

Hicca was seated next to her father atop his personal viewing tower

as they waited for the dragon race to begin. Hicca had been explained how the races worked and her father invited her to watch it with him. She reluctantly accepted, trying her best to hide her excitement. How could she not be excited about a sport that involved dragons? She figured she might as well have a good seat for the race. All around, the villagers were seated in the stands to watch their favorite sporting event. Despite the ever present threat of Siver, the villagers enjoyed the distraction. Stoick always made sure to assign a watch during the races just in case, so they felt at ease that they were safe.

Stoick smiled to himself and glanced at his daughter out of the corner of his eye. He was very happy she had accepted his invitation to sit with him. It was a sign of progress. He knew she wouldn't be able to pass up the chance to have the best seat in the house to watch a dragon race. He watched as Hicca sat back in her seat with her arms crossed over her chest and looking apathetic. Deciding not to keep her waiting he gave the go ahead to signal the riders.

Seeing the chief's signal, the Viking attending to the race horn took a deep breath before putting his lips to the horn and blowing. The horn blared loudly and the whole crowd shouted in anticipation. Then from the direction of the academy, the racers descended. One by one they landed on the great pillar that was lined with dragon perches. Hicca looked at all the riders, noticing what colors marked their team.

There was Fishlegs and Meatlug, covered in orange and green paint resembling a bull's eye. Then there was Snotlout and Hookfang, painted in red and yellow. Then the twins who each had their own colors for their own dragon head. Blue and yellow for Ruffnut and Barf and black and yellow for Tuffnut and Belch. Lastly there was Ash and Stormfly, covered in blue and orange.

"RACERS! ON YOUR MARK!" Stoick shouted. The riders and dragons all tensed up and they prepared to take off. "GET SET! GO!" Stoick shouted, and at his words all the racers leapt from their perches.

Taking the early lead, Ash's was determined to win this race. He wasn't too worried about it though because he always won the races. As he circled around n Stormfly to fly though the dragon stables his heart was pounding in excitement. Flying in races always gave him such a rush. He loved competition.

Flying through the stables and coming out the other side, Ash quickly scanned the streets for a sheep. Immediately he saw one trying to scurry between houses without being noticed. With it out in the open he pointed it out to Stormfly, "Stormfly, there's one girl!" Stormfly took noticed of the sheep and dived down toward it. She deftly swiped it up into her talons and sped off toward the net basket. Passing over Stormfly dropped it in, earning Ash the first point of the race.

Hicca watched as Ash scored his first points. She noticed that the sheep had been painted in his colors, meaning that he had just earned two points. From what she had been told, when a racer put a sheep with their team colors in the basket, they earned two point. If they put a sheep marked with a different team's colors, it was worth one

point. Additionally they were allowed to steal sheep from other racers and the use of dragon fire was allowed.

Hicca had to admit that Ash was a very good flyer. He was supposedly the undefeated champion of the races. She could see why as Ash stole a sheep Fishlegs had just been about to grab. It was marked with Snotlout's colors, earning him another point as he dropped it into his net. Hicca was starting to get really into the race as she leaned forward in excitement. Toothless was as excited as his rider as he watched the race from atop a house. He loved pushing his speed to the limits and in a competitive setting, he and Hicca would have a blast.

Stoick smiled as he noticed Hicca's face light up at the race went on. He had hoped she would like the races, and he had been right. He chuckled lightly as Hicca sat on the edge of her seat. Her hands were clenched in anticipation and she bit her lip lightly as her eyes were focused on Ash.

* * *

><p>Five laps into the race and Ash was the only racer to have any points. No one had ever seen Ash so set on winning a race. They knew that the young man was competitive, but this was crazy. As Ash stole a sheep from Snotlout he looked over to the chief's personal tower and saw Hicca. Her eyes were trained on him and he smiled to himself. His plan was working as he'd hoped. Hicca was impressed by his skills in the race. At the pace he was going he might be win with a perfect score. Urging Stormfly on, they raced through the stables and into their sixth lap.<p>

* * *

><p>It was now the fifteenth lap of the race. Ash frowned at having lost some points to Snotlout, ruining his chance at a perfect race. He was now at 12 points while Snotlout was at six. He cursed to himself as he saw Fishlegs give the twins his sheep. Snotlout and Fishlegs had been having a light competition for Ruffnut's affection over the years, being the last single girl on Berk and all. It annoyed him to no end when they would sometimes give away points to them to gain her favor. Pulling around for the 16th lap, Ash heard the horn blare, signaling the final lap of the race, and the coveted black sheep, which was worth ten points.<p>

"Come on Stormfly," he said to urge his partner. She responded by pumping her wings harder and gaining speed. As he came out of the stables he scanned the skies, waiting for the black sheep to be catapulted into the air. Seeing it, he called out to Stormfly, "There girl! Come one Stormfly, up, up, up," he said in encouragement. As Stormfly gained altitude to intercept the sheep, suddenly Snotlout and Hookfang crashed into them from their left. With Hokang's greater bulk, they were jerked violently to the side and lost speed. With a glare, Ash met the eyes of Snotlout as he glanced over his shoulder back at them.

"Sorry Ash old buddy, but this race is mine," Snotlout said with a smirk. With that, he urged Hookfang on to grab the sheep.

Ash cursed silently. With the black sheep worth so much Snotlout actually stood a good chance of winning. He tried to urge Stormfly to

catch up, but he suddenly noticed that she was exhausted. He palmed his forehead as he realized he had been pushing her too hard in an attempt at a perfect race.

"COME ON ASH!" came a familiar voice. Shaking his head to clear his thoughts, he turned to the chief's tower. To his astonishment he saw Hicca standing on her seat and looking straight at him. Cupping her hands over her mouth she shouted to him again, "GET THAT SHEEP! SMOKE SNOTFACE!" she shouted.

Ash smiled to himself. It made his heart soar to hear and see Hicca cheering for him. Facing forward, he urged Stormfly to gain a little more speed. With a growl, she obliged and pulled up behind Hookfang. Standing up on her back he dashed along her body and leapt off her head and landed on Hookfang's back. Running up his back and toward his head he reached the spot where Snotlout's saddle was. With a leap he got his right leg on top of Snotlout's helmet and used him as a stepping stone. Pushing off he jumped up and snatched the black sheep out of the air as Snotlout was about to catch it. Tucking it under his arm, he fell past Hookfang's snout and spread his legs to land perfectly back in Stormfly's saddle. With the sheep secure, he directed Stormfly into a dive as they came up on the goal. As Stormfly passed over their net she leaned left and allowed Ash to throw the sheep into the net. With that, Ash had won the game.

"AND THE WINNER IS ASH!" Stoick shouted with a hardy laugh.

Ash pumped his fist and gave a shout of joy. Passing over the villagers he leaned over to the side and clapped their hands as he passed. They all shouted to him in praise and admiration at his continued winning streak. Looking back to Hicca, he saw her jumping up and down in excitement, her enthusiasm of his victory matching the rest of the village.

Hicca had never been so excited in her life. The speed, the competition, the applause of the crowd. At that moment Hicca knew one thing. She had to get into the next dragon race.

* * *

><p>After the race the riders were eating at the great hall. The village congratulated Ash as they passed. The twins and Snotlout were not as happy for Ash as the rest of the village. They never won whenever Ash was in a race with them and they were getting tired of always competing for second place. Suddenly Hicca burst into the great hall. Looking around the room and spotting the riders, she immediately came up to their table.<p>

"OH MY GODS YOU GUYS! THAT WAS AMAZING!" she shouted in excitement. She began to rant on about how excited she was and recalled several steals and near collisions they had. The other took in her enthusiasm with amusement. Dragon racing was a regular thing to them.

"So how do I get in on the next race?" she asked, looking around to all of them.

"Well, there will be another race in three days. Just let me know if you want in and find a team color for yourself so we can get the sheep painted beforehand," Fishlegs said.

"Oh I definitely want in. I should go find some colors. I'm gonna ask Gobber what he thinks," she quickly said before turning to run off. Before she left, she stopped and turned to look at Ash. Her cheeks turned tinged with pink as she brushed some auburn hair behind her ears. "Congratulations on your win Ash. You were amazing out there," she said giving him a smile. With that, she turned and rushed out of the hall.

Ash watched her go with a smile on his face. He was cheering on the inside at his success. He had managed to impress her just as he had planned. If he won the next race maybe she would be even more impressed and want to spend time with him.

Apart of him was also looking forward to a new challenge. Hicca had been the first Viking to ever fly a dragon. He figured that over the years she had improved her own flying skill as well. He knew for sure that the next race was sure to be his toughest one yet.

* * *

><p>The next day Hicca and Ruffnut were at the academy. Inside the ring Hicca was teaching Ruffnut how to throw her new shuriken as she had promised. Ruffnut was frustrated by how difficult it was to throw the foreign projectiles. Looking at the barrel with a bull's eye painted on it, with said bull's eye filled with several of Hicca's shuriken, she scowled. She couldn't get how Hicca made it look so effortless.<p>

"It just takes practice," said Hicca to reassure her. Standing at Ruffnut's side, she reached out and adjusted her hold on the shuriken before nodding at her to try again.

Mimicking the way Hicca had shown her, she let the shuriken fly. Her form improved enough that she actually manage to hit the barrel, albeit far from the bull's eye. Ruffnut sighed but smiled at her small progress. Hicca gave a nod of approval and went to collect the shuriken embedded in the barrel.

Ruffnut watched Hicca as she plucked the shuriken out. She and Hicca had never been close despite them being the only two girls around the same age. Ruffnut, like her brother and Snotlout, had bullied her constantly as a child for being weak and different. After Hicca had defeated the Red Death and disappeared however, Ruffnut had actually found herself missing the girl. As she got older there was no one to talk to about 'girl stuff'. Her brother wouldn't listen. Snotlout and Ash didn't care in the least and Fishlegs would just turn beet red and nearly hyperventilate if she tried to speak to him. It made her wish she had been nicer to Hicca when they were children.

"Hey Hicca?" Ruffnut asked to get her attention.

"Hmm?" Hicca said not turning around from her task.

"Are you really gonna leave when this is all over?" she asked curiously.

"Maybe. Maybe not," Hicca answered simply. "Why do you ask?"

"Wellâ€¦I know you and I were never the closest of friends and all,"

she began.

"Gee. Wonder whose fault that was," Hicca responded with dry sarcasm.

"I know, I know, we were all jerks. But you knowâ€|the whole village felt bad for the way we treated you all those years," Ruffnut said honestly.

"Am I supposed to be touched or something Ruff?" Hicca said turning around and raising an eyebrow. "You guys should. I may have been different but I was one of your own. Despite that, you all constantly treated me as an outcast. I bet if it weren't for the fact that I tamed a dragon and killed the Red Death nothing would have ever changed."

"Maybe you're right," Ruffnut said conceding her point. "Still. All I'm saying is, can't you at least give us a chance? We've changed. For the better and it was all because of you."

Hicca searched Ruffnut's face. The girl was being sincere. Maybe she should lighten up on the village a little bit. Then again, it would be nice to hear an actual apology from someone. "I'll think about it," Hicca said vaguely before walking back to Ruff's side and handing the girl her shuriken.

Ruffnut nodded in acceptance of her answer and took back her shuriken. Taking one in her hand she aimed for the target. "By the way Hicca. Ash really missed you over the years," she said looking at the girl and giving her a playful smile.

Hicca flushed slightly and scowled at the girl. "Just aim and throw Ruff," she said in a huff.

Ruff chuckled lightly. She wanted to become friends with Hicca. It was nice having another girl around. She decided she would keep working on Hicca and try to convince her to stay on Berk.

Maybe with her around Fishlegs would stop bothering her. That is if Ash didn't kill him.

* * *

><p>A few hours later Hicca was sitting in the cove meditating with Toothless. Suddenly she heard the loud footsteps of a visitor. Opening her eyes and glancing over her shoulder, she saw her cousin enter the cove.<p>

"Alright Hicca. Let's do some training," he said with a smile.

Hicca stood up and dusted herself off before addressing her cousin. "Alright Snotlout lets begin," she said. "What I'm going to be teaching you is how to properly meditate and clear your mind," she explained.

"WHAT?" Snotlout said in disbelief. "Your just gonna teach me to sit there. I can do that at home. Teach me some cool fighting moves," he demanded.

Hicca took breath through the nose to control her patience. "Snotlout

there's honestly not much I can teach you. You've pretty much always been the best fighter of our generation," she said, playing to his vanity.

Snotlout preened at the compliment. It was true. Snotlout was the best fighter in their age group. The only person capable of taking him was Ash. Even then their fights were pretty evenly matched, with Snotlout having only a few victories over Ash. "Yeah you're right," he said with a proud smirk. "But what is meditation gonna do?"

"The best warriors have a well-trained mind and body. You've already got the body part down. But if we train your mind, you'll become an even better warrior," she explained. "I guarantee it," she added.

Snotlout cocked an eyebrow skeptically at this. He didn't really believe in any of it. Still, he couldn't deny Hicca's skill. If meditation could turn his once wimpy cousin into the warrior she was now, it could do something for him as well.

"Alright fine," he said with a sigh.

"Good. Toothless, light the fire," she said to her companion. At her command the dragon opened his eyes and walked to the campfire. Firing a blast at the wood, he got a fire going. Snotlout watched as Hicca went over to her bags laying around the cove and dug through them. He watched as she produced a tea pot and a packet of herbs. Walking to the water, she filled the pot and walked back to place it by the fire.

"Tea is good for relaxing the body," Hicca explained.

Snotlout rolled his eyes and shrugged. As they waited for the water to boil, Snotlout looked around the cove. His eyes fell on a small patch of plants that he hadn't noticed before. He was sure they had never been there and the plants didn't look native to Berk.

"Did you plant those Hicca?" he asked pointing to the plants.

"Yes. They're plants that I use to make my poisons and then there's Dragon Whiff," she said.

"What's 'Dragon Whiff'?" he asked curiously.

"It's a variant of Dragon Nip I found in Japan. I discovered that it has a very powerful scent that only dragons can detect. I used it to make a special scent that I can splash on myself that Toothless can track if we were to get separated," she explained.

"How well does it work?"

"Pretty well. Toothless can smell and track the stuff from miles away. I once used it in a mission to find the headquarters of an illegal slave smuggling operation," she said casually.

"Really?" Snotlout asked amazed.

"Yep," with the tea ready, Hicca prepared him a cup and handed it to him. As he drank his tea, which was surprisingly good, he asked Hicca about some of the other missions she had done while in Japan. He

listened intently as Hicca told him about all the amazing things she had done while with her ninja clan. From assassinations, to saboteur, spying, and even stealing. He couldn't believe all the dangerous stuff his little cousin had done.

He decided to give the meditation thing a serious try. Maybe it would actually make him a better warrior.

* * *

><p>"Alright Tuffnut, I'm gonna teach you one move," Hicca told Ruffnut as they stood in the kill ring.<p>

"Oh what is it?" Tuffnut asked excitedly.

"It's a deadly move that not even I have been able to master," Hicca told him cryptically.

Tuffnut grew excited at what Hicca had said. Something not even she could do? What kind of move was this?

"It's called the Dim Mak. The Death Punch," she said slowly.

"The Death Punch? What does it do?" Tuffnut asked.

"What does it do? For the love ofâ€", " Hicca stopped to palm her head at his stupidity. "It kills your opponent in one attack. I can't use it simply because I don't have the musculature to pull it off. But you just might," Hicca explained.

"Awesome," Tuffnut muttered under his breath.

"Now watch closely," Hicca said before turning around to face a straw dummy.

Tuffnut watched with anticipation as Hicca showed him the move. He couldn't wait to master this technique. He definitely wanted to try it on his sister.

"And no trying it on Ruffnut," Hicca added, sensing his thoughts.

Dang it.

* * *

><p>Stoick sat in his seat as he waited to start the race. Hicca would be competing in this race, and he was nervous for her. He knew that she was a good flyer, but dragon racing could get very rough. As a father he couldn't help but feel a little worried.<p>

"I think we're ready Stoick," Spitelout said at his side.

Stoick nodded before giving the Spitelout the go ahead to signal the riders. Spitelout nodded in confirmation and signaled to the horn blower. The Viking sounded the horn and all the riders flew from the direction of the academy to land on the starting perches. Stoick's eyes immediately focused on Hicca. She was in her ninja attire. On her face was red paint with two horizontal lines on each of her cheeks. There was also a single vertical red line on her forehead.

Her dragon was also covered in red paint with his front legs being with red stripes. He noticed that the dragon's prosthetic tailfin had been changed to red instead of black and the remaining tailfin had been painted entirely red. Its wings also had a large red stripe and his forehead was marked with a red V shape.

The villagers were more excited than they'd had ever been. How could they not be? Hicca was in this race. She was the first of them to ever fly a dragon and they were eager to see what she could do.

Hicca's heart was beating madly in her chest. She was so excited to be in this race. She looked at the other riders and saw their faces set into determined expressions. Beneath her, Toothless was trembling as he was eager to take off. Hicca faced forward and waited for the signal to begin.

"RACERS!" Stoick shouted to get their attention. This was it. "ON YOUR MARK!" Hicca took a breath through the nose to steady her nerves. "GET SET!" Toothless's body tensed as he prepared to leap from his perch. "GO!"

With that, all the dragons jumped from their perches and took to the air. In a black blur Hicca and Toothless sailed past them, pulling around to fly through the stables, Hicca and Toothless flew through them at blinding speed. When they came out the other side Hicca slowed Toothless down slightly so they could look for a sheep. Together they scanned the empty streets of Berk. Finally Hicca noticed a sheep marked with the twins' colors.

"There's a sheep hun'," she shouted to Toothless while pointing the sheep out. Toothless spotted it and was about to dive down to get it when Snotlout slammed into them from the right. They lurched violently to the side before Hicca stabilized them. "Snotlout!" Hicca shouted with a glare

"Sorry little cousin. But that sheep is all mine," Snotlout called back with proud smirk. With that he directed Hookfang into a dive before grabbing the sheep. Then they flew to their goal before dropping the sheep in and scoring a point.

Hicca scowled at missing her chance to score her first point. With an adjustment of the prosthetic she and Toothless put on a burst of speed to make the second lap. Coming out of the stables she was immediately overtaken by Ash, the twins, and Fishlegs who put on burst of speed themselves. With a curse she urged Toothless to catch up and scanned the streets for a sheep.

While she searched for one, she saw Ash suddenly go into a dive. Looking to where he was heading she saw that he was closing in on a sheep. Stormfly easily snatched it up. From behind him, Snotlout tried to sneak up on him and ram into him. But Ash noticed him and directed Stormfly to do a barrel roll. Rolling safely out of the way, Hookfang and Snotlout flew by and nearly collided with a house before pulling up. With a smile, Ash urged Stormfly to speed up and head for the goal. Passing over it, Stormfly dropped the sheep in, scoring them two points.

Hicca cursed again before slapping her hand against the saddle. Toothless growled in frustration at not having scored any points.

Hicca grit her teeth, this was a lot harder than she thought it would be. She started to wonder if she had any chance of winning.

"COME ON HICCA!" came a shout from below. Following the origin of the shout, Hicca saw her father who was standing up on his tower. "GET THOSE SHEEP!" he shouted in encouragement.

Hicca didn't know why, but hearing him shouting for her sparked a fire in her. She wanted to win this race more than anything. Steeling herself, she adjusted the prosthetic. Toothless put on a burst of speed and shot forward. Even overtaking Ash and Stormfly who were in the lead, reminding everyone that he was the fastest dragon of them all. Passing through the stables in a black blur, they came out the other side and immediately they picked out a sheep. Marked in their own colors at that. Going into a dive, Toothless snatched up the unsuspecting sheep before rocketing to the goal. Doing a loop over the goal, he dropped it in and scored them their first points.

"YES!" Hicca shouted throwing her arms in the air. "Way to go hun," she called to Toothless while patting him on the head. He roared in glee and flew towards the stable. Now that they were in the race, they were both determined to win it.

* * *

><p>It was the 19th lap of the race. Hicca and Ash were tied at 10 points each. The whole village was pumped. This was the most exciting race they had ever seen. They couldn't believe how amazing Hicca was, and it was only her first race. While Ash was usually the village favorite to win, many of them were actually rooting for Hicca.<p>

Ash cursed as Snotlout managed to earn himself another point. He wasn't too worried about him though. Hicca was the real competition. Though Ash was more experienced in the races, Hicca was an expert flyer. Her skills rivalled, and admittedly may have even surpassed his own. He had never been so pumped up for a race. And Toothless, he was amazingly fast. He easily overtook Stormfly many times, snatching a sheep out from under him and annoying him to no end. Normally, this would drive Ash crazy. But when it was Hicca, and he saw her smiling proudly and her eyes sparkled in excitement, he couldn't get mad at her.

Coming around for the 20th lap, the horn sounded for the final lap and the black sheep. He and Stormfly were currently in the lead thanks to Hicca and Fishlegs bumping into each other. But Hicca was closing in fast. Coming out of the stable, he searched the skies for the black sheep.

"There!" he called out while pointing to Stormfly. Stormfly let out an excited squawk before gaining altitude to grab the sheep. As much as Ash liked Hicca, he wasn't going to hold back on her. He was going to do everything in his power to win. Coming up under the sheep, Ash reached both arms out to grab it. Just as his fingers were brushed against the sheep's fluffy hair, a black chain shout out and wrapped around its middle. His eyes widened in surprise as suddenly the sheep was yanked violently out of his sight.

Glancing over his shoulder he saw Hicca pulling in the sheep. The

chain was from her weapon called a Kusarigama. Hicca must have remembered that weapons were allowed in the races. Though it was strange and foreign, it was still technically a weapon. With a flick of the tailfin Toothless shot forward, allowing the sheep to fly right into Hicca's arms. They shot over him and Stormfly and headed for the goal. Ash growled in frustration and urged Stormfly after them. But it was no use. Toothless was simply too fast. Ash watched as they headed for the goal. As they were within a teen feet of the goal, Hicca looked over her shoulder and locked eyes with Ash. Giving him a playful smile, she winked at him before facing forward and throwing the sheep into her goal. Winning them the race.

"AND HICCA WINS!" Stoick shout in genuine happiness. He was glad Hicca had won the race. He had been cheering for her the entire time. His heart warmed as he saw her beaming with delight at her win.

On Toothless, Hicca was cheering ecstatically at her victory. She through her arms in the air and waved to the crowds. The village was just as enthusiastic about her win as she was. They reached their hands up to her, allowing her to pass by and clap their hands with hers. Then she flew up toward the sky and did some midair spins. Toothless roared in excitement and shot some plasma blasts into the sky. The crowd cheered and watched the sky light up in purple flashes.

Hicca smiled to herself. That had been the most fun she had ever had. And the village did this regularly. She could get used to this. The speed, the competition, the village shouting her name in praise and admiration. Suddenly Berk was looking a lot more like a place to call home.

* * *

><p>A few hours after the race, Ash was walking up the great hall for lunch. While he was slightly disappointed his winning streak had just been broken, he wasn't too upset about it. For some reason, losing to Hicca hadn't felt so bad. Seeing her smile and throw her hands up in victory, he just thought she was so cute. Besides, she had run a fair and clean race. She hadn't cheated and won by using her skill and ingenuity. She'd simply been better than him that day.<p>

He had heard from the villagers that Hicca was in the great hall right now. So he decided to be a good loser and congratulate her personally on her win. Then maybe she would see he could be a nice guy and want to spend time with him. Entering the great hall, his face immediately fell into a frown as he saw Hicca seated at a table. What made him upset was that she was surrounded by men. She was sitting down and eating her food while other men from the village, a few years him and his friends seniors, chatted her up. What made it worse was that she seemed to be enjoying the attention as she giggled and answered their question with a smile.

Looking at their faces, Ash's fists clenched as he saw them looking at her. He suddenly wanted to punch something as he saw they were looking at her. They were looking at her like she was a piece of meat. Ash knew what they were really after. As Hicca technically wasn't a member of the tribe, they could share a bed with her for a night without dishonoring a family and having to marry her. She was a pretty young lady after all. They were openly flirting with her, throwing her sly grins and winks. Ash's hands twitched for his non

present battle axe.

Finally they got up and left, leaving Hicca smiling to herself and waving goodbye. Ash knew he shouldn't be jealous, they weren't together after all. But the thoughts of Hicca finding someone else, being held by someone else, and especially kissing someone else drove him crazy. Walking up he had a scowl on his face, one that Hicca noticed as he reached her table.

Hicca stared into Ash's face, which held a very unpleasant expression. "Something on your mind Ash?" she asked raising an eyebrow.

"Why do you even talk to them?" Ash asked sharply as he gestured to the retreating group of men. "You know that all they want to do is share a bed with you right?"

Hicca's eyebrows narrowed as she frowned at Ash. "You make it sound like I'm easy to get into bed Ash," Hicca replied with a glare.

"Well you didn't seem to be turning them away," he replied, while crossing his arms.

"I don't see why what I do is any of your business Ash," Hicca replied harshly as she stood up from her seat. "You and I aren't married, engaged, or even together. I'm an adult and I can do whatever I want with whoever I want," she added defiantly.

Ash continued to glare at her while she put her hands on her hips and glared back. He palmed his forehead mentally. This wasn't what he had come here for. She was right after all. They weren't a thing, as much as he wanted to be. He released a breath in defeat and opened his mouth to apologize when Hicca cut him off.

"Besides, the only person I would even think about getting with," she began while she held up her fingers. "Who would have the slightest, itty bitty chance, would be Fishlegs," she finished.

"WHAT!?" came a shout from the riders seated at the table next to them.

"WHAT!?" came the shout of Fishlegs as his head shot up from his meal. He had been listening the entire time, but was pretending not to notice them.

"WHAT!?" shouted Ash, absolutely bewildered. "FISHLEGS!? FISHLEGS!?" he shouted while gesturing to the boy. "You would only consider Fishlegs over anybody else," he asked hotly.

"Sitting right here you know," Fishlegs grumbled to himself quietly.

"Yes," Hicca answered. "You know why? Because he's sweet." Hicca paused to let her words sink in. Then she decided to make a point, she raised a hand to count off her reason with her fingers, "He's never bullied or said a mean thing to me in his life. He was the only person who bothered to talk to me besides asking me to sharpen a weapon for him. He also never threw me to the ground, kicked me down when I tried to get up, and then dropped an axe onto my chest," she

said while glaring at Ash.

Ash knew that the last part was referring to when he had found her and Toothless in the cove after she was selected to face the Nightmare. He had been quite rough with her at that time. He remained silent as Hicca continued to speak.

"Look Ash. I admit that when I was a little girl, I had a crush on you. You wanna know part of the reason that was?" she asked him. As he met her gaze, she continued, "It because I wanted to be like you. I admired you. You were strong and everyone loved you. But now, I've gotten strong on my own and in my own way," she said firmly while pointing a thumb to herself. "And I'm not a little girl anymore. I've grown up, and now that I have. I see that you're just a jerk. I want someone who will treat me kindly and with affection. We both know that isn't you," she finished while jabbing a finger at him.

That stung Ash right in the heart. He doubted being stabbed would hurt this much. "You still like me," he said as a last resort. "You kissed me the night you came back to the village," he pointed out.

Hicca rolled her eyes. "Oh please Ash. It was a kiss, not a confession. It didn't mean anything. I did that to mess with you," she replied casually. Then she spun on her heel and walked over to where the other riders were seated.

They watched her approached with wide eyes as they wondered what she was up to. When she reached the table she came up to the side of Fishlegs. He turned and looked at her nervously. Then without warning she reached out and grabbed both side of his face with her hands before planting a kiss firmly on his lips. Fishlegs froze in shock and everyone in the room's jaw dropped open.

Ash stood there with his expression frozen in pain. He quickly his it as Hicca ended the kiss before turning around and marching back to him. She looked up at him and locked eyes with him. Then she 'hmphe'd' before stepping around him and muttering a strange word. 'Baka'? He didn't know what it meant but it sounded like an insult. He turned and watched her saunter out of the room before opening the door and exiting the great hall.

Ash watched her go. Beating himself up at opening his stupid mouth. This had gone so bad so fast. He should have just congratulated her. Now he felt he was even further from his goal than ever before.

"You okay man?" Snotlout said coming up from behind him. Glancing over his shoulders, he noticed all the riders were behind him with concerned expression on their face. Except for Fishlegs who stood in the back with fear of Ash written all over his face.

"Fishlegs," Ash muttered to get his attention.

"Yes Ash?" Fishlegs asked, getting ready to run if Ash suddenly charged him.

"Does 'Baka', mean anything to you?" He asked.

Fishlegs' eyes fell to the ground as he thought about the word. Hicca had been teaching him some Japanese whenever they spent time

together. "It means 'idiot'," he informed him.

Ash released a breath and face forward. _That sounds about right_, thought to himself sadly. With that, he dropped his gaze to the ground and walked toward the doors of the great hall. He opened them and walked out. He needed an outlet for the inner emotional storm brewing inside of him. Going to his home, he grabbed his battle axe before heading off into the woods.

* * *

><p>Oh Ash. You baka. Hope you like. Feel free to review and comment.

12. Chapter 12

****New Strategy****

"YAAAHHH!" Ash yelled as he hurled his axe at a tree. He was in the forest in his familiar training area venting his frustration in the way he usually did. Hurling his axe and hacking into the trees. Walking over, he grabbed his axe by the handle before giving it a sharp tug and pulling the blade out of the tree.

Still frustrated he firmly gripped the handle before swinging at the tree. "Stupid Hicca. With her stupid beautiful green eyes and her stupid gorgeous face," he said between swings. _And her stupid shiny hair and her stupid pink lips that look incredibly soft. _He added in his head. He had it bad for Hicca. As much as the new Hicca frustrated him with her indifference and frosty attitude toward him, he was extremely, utterly, and undoubtedly attracted to her.

Everything about her made him want her. Her skills in battle were amazing. Any Viking man loved a girl who knew how to use a weapon. Her demeanor was also appealing as she was completely confident. Her eyes had a fire in them and they practically dared anyone to mess with her. Then there was the fact that he found her to be the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Whenever he saw her he would catch himself staring at her. When she walked by he saw the confident stride and the way her hips swayed back and forth. And though he'd deny it, he would catch himself staring after her as she walked away, with his eyes drifting a little lower than intended and lingering a little longer than would be considered polite.

"I can be sweet," Ash muttered to himself with a scowl. "I'll show her. I'll be the sweetest, kindest, most caringest Viking she's ever seen," he said to himself with a nod. As he processed what he said he released a groan and brought his hand up to rub his forehead. "Those words don't belong in the same sentence," he said in frustration. Vikings weren't described as caring, kind, or sweet. They were gruff, direct, tough, and stern.

But that didn't seem to be something that would work on Hicca. He wondered what he should do about her. He didn't want to just give up on her. Though that definitely would make his mom happy. She hadn't been happy when he told her he didn't want to find a wife anymore. He had a feeling his father knew why and he grinned slyly at him and gave him a nudge to the ribs.

"Hey Ash," came a voice behind him.

Jumping in surprise, he whirled around and held his axe out in front of him. Standing behind him was a frightened Fishlegs, who held his hands up submissively and was shaking in fear.

"Gods Fishlegs, don't sneak up on me like that," he said with a growl. He lowered his axe, much to the relief of Fishlegs who let out a breath and relief before looking at Ash questionably.

"Did I really surprise you? You didn't hear me at all?" Fishlegs asked.

"No," Ash said in confusion.

"Oh my gods its working," Fishlegs said in excitement as he laughed in exhilaration.

"What are you talking about?" Ash said in annoyance.

"Hicca had been teaching me how to improve my stealth skills. Obviously they've been paying off," he said proudly.

Ash frowned at the mention of Hicca. He really didn't want to hear her name right now. The gods however seemed to have different ideas as Snotlout and Tuffnut came up behind Fishlegs.

"She's been teaching me meditation. Clears the mind. The best of warriors do it you know," Snotlout said.

"She been teaching me the Dim Mak. The Death Punch," Tuffnut said.

"What do you guys want?" Ash said sharply. Not wanting them to keep talking about her.

"We just wanted to see if you were ok after you're argument with Hicca," Fishlegs said with concern.

This talk of Hicca was not helping his mood. Hearing them having such good exchanges with Hicca was driving him crazy. Then his mind kept replaying how she had kissed Fishlegs. Now the boy was dumb enough to stand right in front of him. Anger started to bubble up inside him and he had to release it.

"I'm fine," he snarled before turning to his right and hurling his axe. What he had failed to notice before he tossed his axe was Hicca, who just happened to be walking by on her way to the cove.

"Hicca look out!" Fishlegs yelled before Ash got to open his mouth.

Everyone's stomach dropped to their feet as they were sure Fishlegs' warning came too late. As it looked like the axe was about to end the life of their comrade Hicca stopped and immediately lifted her arm up, catching the axe by the handle and stopping its flight. Hicca turned to them and then brought the axe to her face to examine.

After her examination she looked up to see who had thrown the axe at her. Her eyes passed over each boy, who she gave a small smile and even a wave to Fishlegs. But to Ash she only scowled and glared before she threw the axe down to the floor, embedding the blade in the dirt before turning and continuing on her way.

Ash watched Hicca go and passed a hand through his hair as he groaned in frustration. _Thor damn it. That was the sexiest thing I've ever seen a woman do,_ Ash thought to himself in exasperation. Now he wanted Hicca even more. He definitely didn't want to give up on her now. His warrior mind kicked in. He realized he was going to need to change of tactics. He needed advice.

"Fishlegs," he said sharply before whirling around to face the boy.

"What?" Fishlegs squeaked in surprise.

"Come with me," he commanded before stepping around the boy and walking back to the village.

Fishlegs watched him go with fear. Was Ash going to kill him for the kiss? Oh gods he hoped not. He knew Ash liked Hicca and he hadn't expected Hicca to kiss him.

"NOW FISHLEGS!" Ash called out. "And Snotlout, take my axe back to my house," he added not stopping to turn around.

"Coming," Fishlegs said before hesitantly following after the boy. Behind him, Tuffnut and Snotlout whispered a prayer for his safe trip to the afterlife and a quick and painless demise.

* * *

><p>Ash stalked to the forge with a purpose. He needed to talk to someone older and wiser. Behind him, Fishlegs followed obediently, but scared out of his mind.<p>

"Gobber!" he called out when he reached the forge.

"Coming," said the smith coming out of the back. Gobber's shop had gotten bigger over the years. He also had a side business working on dragons' teeth. "Oh Ash. What can I do for ya lad?" Gobber asked with a smile.

"I need advice Gobber," Ash answered firmly. "On women," he added.

Gobber's eyebrows shot up in surprise. Ash needing help with women? That seemed almost ludicrous. Women practically flocked to the boy like dragons on fish. What kind of girl wouldn't wantâ€"Ohhh. Smirking knowingly, Gobber knew why Ash had come. "This is about Hicca isn't it lad?" Gobber said smiling at Ash. Ash remained silent and Gobber took that as confirmation. "You want to court her, don't you lad?" he asked.

"Yes," Ash answered firmly.

"What was that?" came the low voice of a familiar man.

Everyone in the room looked to the entrance of the forge and saw Stoick standing there. He had a serious look on his face that was directed at Ash. Ash gulped nervously. He couldn't tell what the chief was feeling. His face looked like he wanted to pummel something. Maybe, a man trying to court his long lost daughter.

Looking into his eyes, Stoick walked up to Ash and loomed over him. "You wanna say that again Ash? To her father maybe," he asked.

Ash palmed himself in the forehead. He hadn't thought about asking Stoick's permission to court Hicca. It was technically proper procedure for a man to ask the girl's father beforehand. Taking a breath he locked eyes with the chief. "Yes chief. I do," he said as respectfully as he could.

Everyone held their breath as they waited for Stoick to react. His face was blank as he took in Ash's answer. They couldn't tell if he wanted to throttle Ash or clap in on the back. After a few more moments of awkward silence Stoick threw his head back and laughed. That surprised everyone in the room as they let out a breath.

"You're ok with this chief?" Ash asked cautiously. He wanted the chief's blessing. He respected Stoick as a leader but also feared him as a fellow warrior. He didn't doubt that the chief could and probably would kill him if he did anything to Hicca.

"Of course I am lad," he said giving him a hearty shrug. "I'd say you're the best fit for Hicca out of anyone in this village. And, if Hicca and you were to become an item, it might give her a reason to stay," he explained. He knew Ash was a good man. He figured he was the best match for her out of him, Tuffnut and Fishlegs.

"Well thanks chief," he said in relief. It was good to know he had the chief on his side. Plus, he also thought that getting together with Hicca might make her stay as well.

"Ok lad. So let me give you some advice on courting a women," Stoick said.

Ash nodded in confirmation, letting the chief know he was all ears.

"There are three things you need to know when courting a woman," he began. Ash nodded and he continued, "The first rule. Never follow your instincts," he said in warning. At seeing Ash raise an eyebrow skeptically he explained, "I know what you're think and trust me on this one. Your instincts will get you through anything in life and in battle. But not with women," he said.

"Ok," Ash said with a nod. He didn't know whether or not he fully believed this. But then again, Stoick was the older and wiser warrior. And he had also actually been married before so Ash thought he probably did know better.

"Ok second. Now this is the most difficult thing for us Vikings. You're gonna have to show your soft side," at seeing Ash's jaw drop in disbelief he held up a hand to silence him. "I know. It seems difficult and trust me, it is. But women don't always just want a

warrior. They want someone who will be sensitive to them and kind," he explained.

Ash thought back to Hicca's last words to him. She had said she wouldn't be with him because he lacked those qualities. He was going to have to suck it up if he wanted her. He nodded reluctantly.

"I hear women like flowers," Fishlegs piped in, popping out from behind Stoick.

"Yes flowers are good," the chief said in agreement. "Also, sweet things never hurt," he added.

"And compliments. Don't forget compliments," Gobber said, adding his own advice. Fishlegs and Stoick both nodded in agreement.

"Ok, so flowers, sweets, and compliments," Ash said counting them off. "Are you sure this will work chief?" Ash asked looking up to chief.

"It worked for me," the chief answered. "Valka couldn't stand me at first. Told me she hated my guts every time she saw me. Then I followed these pointers and we married," Stoick said proudly.

Ash nodded. If it worked for the chief then it should work for him. Then the chief spoke up to say his last pointer.

"Men from the most ancient and distant of cultures have used this technique since the dawn of time to woo their women. It is a secret move that is sure to win the heart of your lass," he said cryptically. At that the chief put his hands on his hips. Ash cocked his head to the side as he continued to look at the chief in question. Then Stoick flexed his left pec. Then his right pec. Then he flexed them at the same time and then back to alternating.

"What is that?" Ash asked slightly weirded out.

"The pec pop of love," Gobber whispered in amazement.

"Yes lad, this techniques works every time. It got me my wife, and I bet you can ask most of the men of the village and they'll tell you they used it on their own wives as well," Stoick said continuing to make his chest bounce up and down.

"I don't know if I can do that chief," Ash said taking a step back and trying to focus on the chief's face. "But I think I got everything I need," Ash said while making an attempt to step around the chief.

"Hold on lad. One more piece of advice," Stoick said. Still making his pecs dance he locked eyes with Ash as he prepared to depart with his last piece of wisdom. "Because you're a man, you're bound to say something stupid at some point in your attempts to woo my daughter. When that time comes and you have no other way out. Fake a heart attack," he said wisely.

"Uh...ok chief. Can I go now?" Ash asked.

"Sure lad. Good luck," he said stepping aside. He watched Ash duck his head and exit the forge and head for his house. He wished him all

the luck in the world at winning his daughters heart. Thor knows he was going to need it.

* * *

><p>Ash took all the advice he had received into serious consideration. Starting tomorrow he was going to try them out on Hicca. Not like he had anything to lose. She made it pretty apparent that she hated his guts.<p>

Just you wait Hicca.

* * *

><p>The next morning, Ash woke up early and headed into the forest. He was hell bent on finding some nice looking flowers for Hicca. He searched his memory for a familiar meadow that had wide assortment of them. Finding it without too much difficulty he plucked a sizeable amount of blue flowers that he thought would look nice with Hicca's eyes. Once he felt he had collected enough he headed back to the village.<p>

As he was headed back he stopped in his tracks as he saw Hicca on her way to the forge. Taking a breath he steeled himself for what he was about to do. Putting the flowers behind his back he approached slowly. As Hicca came to the entrance to the forge she called out to Gobber and they spoke about something Ash wasn't paying attention to.

When he was within earshot of Hicca, he paused to clear his throat. Swallowing nervously, he opened his mouth to call out to her when he was interrupted.

"Hey Hicca," called Ruffnut, who came running up to her side. "Time for the shuriken lessons come on," Ruffnut said taking her hand and pulling her along. Hicca complied without turning around and noticing Ash as Ruffnut pulled her off in the direction of the academy.

Ash stood on the spot with his mouth hanging open. His shoulders sagged as he watched Hicca walk away. _Damn it. _He cursed inwardly. Behind him, he heard sniggering. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw some older Viking women giggling at his failed attempts to present Hicca with his gift. He flushed and quickly ducked his head before walking away. He would get another chance.

* * *

><p>A couple hours later, Ash found Hicca in the great hall. Nervously he walked through the table with his flowers behind his back. He was coming up from behind Hicca as she was eating from a plate of food in front of her.<p>

He was sweating profusely as he approached Hicca with his flowers behind his back. He prayed that nothing interrupt him this time. Just as he was about to call out to Hicca. Snotlout interrupted.

"Yo Hicca. We gonna meditate or what?" he asked impatiently.

"Yeah. Sorry Snot I was just grabbing a quick bit to eat," she said before sliding from her seat and leaving with her cousin.

Ash could not believe his luck today. Did the gods not want him to give the damned flowers to Hicca? Was Freyja cursing him? Did she not want him to find love?

He shook his head to rid himself of the negative thoughts. It was just bad luck. He would get another chance.

* * *

><p>As Hicca was walking towards the feeding station in the center of town, Ash was peeking around corners and following behind her.<p>

"This time. This time for sure," he said in determination. As Hicca stood in the open, he noticed her head turn back and forth as she was looking for something.

At her pause, Ash stepped around his corner and started walking toward Hicca.

"Hey Hicca," called out Tuffnut as he was approaching her.

"Oh no you don't!" Ash called out. Quickly he scooped up a nearby bucket and hurled it at Tuffnut's head. It stuck on the side of the head and he went down like a rock.

Satisfied, he turned back to Hicca and saw her climbing onto Toothless. "NOOOO! Hicâ€", " but it was too late as Hicca and Toothless shot into the sky and out of earshot.

"AAAAAGGGGGGHHHHHH!" Ash called out in frustration. He stomped his foot and started yelling profanities. The women nearby covered their children's ears in horror at his words. Still angry, he walked over and started kicking a barrel to vent his frustration.

"Are you ok Ash?" came Fishlegs' voice behind him.

Quickly, he whirled around and face his friend. "NO FISHLEGS! I AM NOT OK!" He snarled. "I just wanted to give these damn flowers to Hicca, but the universe must hate me because something always interrupts me!" he screamed in exasperation. Immediately he stormed off towards the woods, muttering under his breath in frustration.

Fishlegs watched him go. He felt bad for his friend. He wished there was something he could do. Suddenly, he felt a nudge from behind as Meatlug bumped him for attention.

Turning around to pet her, he was struck with an idea. Maybe he could help him out. "Come on girl," he said while mounting his dragon. "Let's go find Hicca."

At his signal Meatlug flapped her wings and took to the air. Heading in the direction that Hicca had gone.

* * *

><p>"GAAAHHHHH!" Ash yelled in frustration. He started swinging the flowers against the tree as he would his axe. "STUPID FLOWERS! STUPID

LOVE! STUPID FISHLEGS!" he cried in anger. The poor flowers were being killed as they were being beaten against the tree.<p>

Why did he even bother? Was it hopeless to even try to win Hicca's affection? Maybe Freyja really had cursed him. Anger suddenly spiking again he started swinging at the tree with renewed vigor, not taking notice of his surroundings.

"Ash?" came a voice behind him.

The voice was familiar and it caused him to freeze. Whirling around while keeping the flowers behind his back he looked into the face of Hicca. "Hicca! Hi! Hi Hicca. Hi," he stammered out nervously.

"Yeah, hi Ash," Hicca said raising an eyebrow at his strange behavior. "Fishlegs said you wanted to talk to me?" she said crossing her arms in front of her and looking up at him expectantly.

Thank you Fishlegs. "Uhmâ€|yes I did," Ash said nervously. Looking into her eyes, he was suddenly rendered mute as his tongue seemed to swell up and his mouth went dry.

"Well?" Hicca asked inquisitively.

"Right, right," Ash said flushing. Then he pulled the flowers out from behind his back and presented them toward her. "I happened to find these this morning. And I thought to myself that they were nice looking or something. And they reminded me of youâ€|because I think you'reâ€|well you know," he said. Suddenly he looked down at the flowers. He cringed when he took in their state. They were destroyed with many of the flowers wilted and bent. Most of them were missing their petals as well.

Hicca stared at the flowers for a moment before looking back up to Ash. She raised an eyebrow at him questioningly.

Ash's face dropped at her expression. He raised a free hand rub his eyes. Well this was a bust. He might have just insulted her by comparing her to some destroyed flowers. Then he uncovered his eyes as he heard Hicca sigh. Looking down to her, he was surprised when she was giving him a small smile. Small, but it was definitely genuine.

"At least you're trying," she said while reaching out a plucking a flower that was still mostly decent. Smiling down at it, she brought it up to her face and gave it small sniff. Then she looked back at Ash and smiled at him again before turning to walk off.

Ash watched her walk away with his eyes wide open. It had worked. She had warmed up to him. And her smile, it had been real. Maybe there was something to the advice Stoick, Gobber, and Fishlegs had given him after all.

He pumped his fist and his heart soared. "Yes!" he said to himself. Quickly, he thought back to the other things they had told him.

He was going to try out another one tomorrow.

* * *

><p>Ash walked up to the ring where Ruffnut and Hicca were having there shuriken lessons. Ash had decided to compliment Hicca today. As he watched them practice he tried to come up with something to say. He wasn't really good at giving compliments.<p>

"Hey uhm Hicca. You have really nice aim," he called down to her. _Nice aim. Really?_

Down in the ring both girls paused in their shuriken throwing. Ruffnut looked up at Ash and snorted. Is that really the best he could come up with?

"Thanks Ash," Hicca called up to him. Ruffnut looked at the girl in disbelief. On her face was a genuinely happy grin. Then Hicca reached into her shuriken pouch and tossed one at the targets without looking. It whizzed through the air and hit the bull's eye.

Ash smiled back and turned to walk off. _Huh. That actually worked.

—

Down in the ring, Hicca was smiling to herself. First some flowers and now a compliment. Maybe Ash was starting to like her.

"Really?" Ruffnut asked deadpanned.

"What?" Hicca asked confused.

* * *

><p>The next day, Ash ran down to the docks with his satchel around his shoulders. Trader Johan had come to visit today. He was hoping that he would have what he was looking for.<p>

Reaching the docks, he spotted the tall mustached man dressed in colorful decorative furs.

"Trader Johan," he called out in greeting.

Johan looked over to Ash and smiled. "Ah, Ash Hofferson. It good to see you lad. What can I offer you today?" he asked.

"Actually Johan, I was hoping that you'd have some chocolate," Ash said.

"Chocolate. I didn't think you one to enjoy sweets young Hofferson," the man said curiously.

"Well it's for a girl," Ash said quietly while rubbing the back of his neck.

"Well why didn't you say so lad. That makes perfect sense. Ladies love chocolate. So who's the gal lad?" Ash didn't really want to inform him. As he opened his mouth to give a vague answer Johan spoke up. "Oh by the way lad. I was so surprised to hear that Miss Hicca had returned. And she's apparently been to the land of the rising sun. You wouldn't believe some of the stuff I got from her," Johan said with a smile. Then he noticed Ash had flushed slightly at the mention of Hicca. _ Ohhhhh_, he thought with a sly grin.

Turning round he walked below the deck of his ship. Rummaging around

he found a special chocolate treat wrapped in paper. Smiling to himself he walked back up to the deck and to Ash. "Here you are lad. A special treat from Japan itself. Hicca should know what it is," he said handing them to Ash.

"Thanks Johan," Ash said gratefully. "You probably want your payment so I've got something you might like," Ash said before rummaging around his satchel.

"You can have it lad," Johan said. "Free of charge," he added with a smile.

Ash looked up to Johan inquisitively. When he saw that Johan was serious he smiled and nodded gratefully before stepping off the ship and running to find Hicca.

Johan smiled after him. _Oh young love_, Johan thought to himself. He hoped that the treat would help the lad earn Hicca's favor. He wished he could see the look on Hicca's face.

Ash ran through the village looking for Hicca. After several moments of searching, he found her on the path toward the great hall.

Getting within earshot, he straightened himself out and caught his breath. "Hicca," he called out to her.

Hearing him, she turned around and looked at him. "Oh hey Ash," she said with a small smile.

Ash's heart fluttered at seeing her smile. Their interactions were a lot friendlier now. She would greet him with a smile and they would have light casual conversations. Ash felt that it was progress.

"I got something for you from Johan," he said while walking up to her.

"Oh yeah?" she said curious.

"Yeah. It's chocolate. I don't have much of a sweet tooth, but I thought you might enjoy it," he said rubbing his neck. With that, he raised his arm and handed it to her. He watched as she unwrapped the paper before pulling out a strange, chocolate covered stick.

"Pockie?" Hicca said as she immediately recognized the treat.

"Oh so you do know it. Johan said it was from Japan," Ash said with a shrug. He raised an eyebrow as he saw Hicca just stare at the stick. Did she not like pockie? He hoped that wasn't the case.

"Yeah it is," she said. Then she looked up at him and smiled. "You know. Two people share this treat in a special way in Japan. Want some?" she said offering the stick to him.

"Uhm sure," Ash said. He didn't want to be rude.

"Here. Hold this end in your mouth," Hicca said while presenting him the end of the stick that wasn't entirely covered in chocolate. He raised an eyebrow curiously but complied and bit down lightly on

it.

"Ok whatâ€", " Ash was preparing to say before he was cut off. He abruptly stopped speaking as Hicca placed her hands on his shoulders and raised herself up on her tip toes. He froze as Hicca bit down on the chocolate end of the stick. He kept perfectly still as his heart beat madly in his chest as Hicca slowly started making her way up the stick, taking small bites as she inched her face closer to his. Ash stared as her pink lips came closer and closer. He noticed that her eyes were closed. He figured she was going to kiss him at this rate. He started closing his eyes as she got closer, before she bit through the middle of the stick and pulled her face away.

Hicca chewed the treat and savored its chocolaty goodness. She wiped her mouth with her finger before looking up to smile at Ash. "If we were lovers. I wouldn't have stopped midway," she said with a wink. Then she turned on her heel and walked off. Adding a little more sway to her hips as she sauntered off.

Ash watched her go with his end of the pockie still in his mouth. Hicca had almost kissed him. That was undoubtedly progress. _Thank you Johan, _said mentally. With that, he finished off the pockie. It tasted very good.

* * *

><p>There you go. new chapter. This is for people who have been wanting to see some Hiccstrid moments. Hope you guys like it. Just a warning. Don't get too excited. Cuz Ash is going to screw it up in the next chapter. Just letting you know

13. Chapter 13

****Downhill Fast****

"So then I kicked him in the jewels before knocking him out with a roundhouse kick," Hicca said to Ash before taking a sip of her mead. Currently, the majority of the village was in the great hall having dinner and talking about the dragon race that occurred earlier that day. Hicca hadn't competed in that one so Ash had won.

"Nice," Ash said to her with smile. Hicca, the riders, and Ash were all seated at the same table. Hicca was seated across from him and was regaling him with stories about some of the missions she had done while she was in her ninja clan. Ash would also tell her stories about some of the encounters the riders and he had during her six years absence.

Ever since taking the chief's, Fishlegs', and Gobber's advice about courting Hicca things had gone remarkably well. They were on much friendlier terms than they had ever been. They would go on flights together, eat together, Hicca would smile when they talked, and they would exchange stories like they were doing now. Ash's sprits were higher than they had ever been. With his relationship with Hicca going so well he figured that he may actually have a real shot with her. He wasn't ready to confess and take their relationship to the next level just yet, but he felt they were getting there. He would make his move soon he told himself.

Seated a few tables away, Gobber was watching the interaction between his old apprentice and Ash. He smiled to himself before elbowing the chief seated to his right. When Stoick turned to see what he wanted, he looked in the direction of Hicca and Ash and pointed. When Stoick looked to where he was pointing he smiled.

Stoick was happy to see the relationship between Ash and his daughter going to well. His smile grew as he saw Hicca cover her mouth to suppress a giggle. His advice to Ash had obviously worked. He figured that Hicca and Ash could possibly become an item soon. Maybe when they got together, Hicca would want to rejoin the tribe officially. He really hoped so and cheered the boy on mentally.

Hicca was listening to Ash talk about the first time the riders encountered Changewings. Hicca smiled to herself as she thought about her relationship with Ash. She had been surprised by his sudden apparent interest in courting her. She could tell that Ash was really trying and she was flattered by his efforts. Ash had done many things that were out of character for him. He had given her flowers, complimented her, given her chocolate, he had asked her to go on flights with him, eat with him, and just spend time with him in general.

Hicca was giddy when she thought about what all of this could lead up to. She and Ash might actually become a couple. Her heart fluttered and she got butterflies just thinking about it. She couldn't believe that Ash really liked her. Or at least he seemed to like her. She had never been courted before and no guy had ever shown interest in her before now. Back in the old days everyone was sure that Hicca would never marry, or Stoick would have married her off when she came of age to cement an alliance with a distant tribe. She desperately wanted to know if the person she'd had feeling for since she was a child felt the same. She contemplated asking him, but was hesitant. Was that just something you asked someone?

"Ash?" Hicca said before she could stop herself. At her interruption, Ash stopped speaking and looked her in the eye, letting her know she had his attention. Hicca cast her gaze down to the tabletop before brushing some hair out of her face and behind her ears. She had to know. "Do youâ€¦," she began before pausing to swallow a lump in her throat out of nervousness. Shyly she looked back up to Ash and blushed slightly. "Do you like me?" she asked.

_Crap, _was the thought that went through Ash's head at Hicca's question. He didn't know how to respond. He didn't like Hicca. He loved her. But he wasn't prepared to tell her that. Not yet at least. Ash opened his mouth to speak, but no words came out. All that escaped his throat was a strangled expulsion of air.

"Ash?" Hicca asked again. Her heart was thrumming madly in her chest as she anxiously awaited his answer.

Ash was at a complete loss. He wracked his brain trying to find a good answer. But what came out was, "Oh well, the runes said we were meant to be together so I figures might as well?" he said weakly.

Hicca's face fell and she furrowed her eyebrows in confusion. "What was that about runes?" she asked.

"Well I got a reading from Gothi about my future love and you fit the description," he said with the tiniest shrug. Ash was mentally kicking himself. Gods, why was it so hard to say how he felt? Why was he so bad at this?

Hicca narrowed her eyes at Ash and scowled. "So that it then? You're just following the runes?" she asked unhappily.

Ash noted the edge in her voice. He took in her face and cringed. This wasn't going well. Hicca obviously didn't like what he was saying. _Ok Ash, she obviously isn't happy. But you haven't completely screwed up yet. Just say 'No'._ Ash told himself mentally. Ash opened his mouth to speak, but again no words came out. Clearing his throat and taking a sip of mead he tried again. _Damn it man! Say SOMETHING! Say 'dragons', 'blue', 'sunset', just don't say, "_Yes," Ash finally said. _NOOOOO!_

Hicca felt her heart clench at Ash's answer. Immediately she slammed her palms on the table and stood up. "Of course it is!" she snarled at Ash before turning and walking from the table and toward the exit of the great hall. Toothless, who had been sitting behind her the entire time on the floor followed after her.

"HICCA WAIT!" Ash cried frantically before getting up from the table and hurrying after her. He quickly jogged around the table and up to Hicca. "Hicca," he began while he put a hand on her shoulder to stop her. He was about to speak before Hicca whirled around and glared at him. Ash could see the obvious hurt in her eyes.

"So that it then? You've just been courting me because some mark on a stick or bone said so? Do you feel anything for me at all?" she shouted. Hicca could feel her heart breaking. She wanted Ash to tell her she was wrong. That he honestly felt something for her.

Ash stood frozen on the spot. Out of the corner of his eyes he could see the rest of the great hall looking at them both. He couldn't do it. Not with everyone staring at him. He looked into Hicca's eyes, eyes that were full of pain. His heart sank at knowing he was the cause. Suddenly he noticed someone come into his field of vision behind Hicca. Looking past her, he saw Gobber. When their eyes met, Gobber put his remaining hand over his chest and mimed falling down. Ash realized what Gobber was getting at. The chief's last piece of advice.

Looking back to Hicca and meeting her eyes, he could see that she was waiting for his answer. What he was about to attempt was going to be a long shot. But he decided that he had nothing to lose. Ash brought his right arm over to grasp his left as authentically as he could, "Oh wow, there's suddenly a shooting pain inâ€", " Ash began before Hicca cut him off.

"Don't you dare try to fake a heart attack Ash!" she hissed angrily. Unbeknownst to Ash, Stoick had used this tactic on her several times already. All incidents involving him getting out of giving her the talk that a maturing girl needed when they reached puberty. "Please tell me I'm wrong Ash," she said desperately. She was barely holding back the tears threatening to burst from her mental damn.

Ash cursed himself for his cowardliness. Even now he couldn't say it. He cast his eyes down to the floor in shame and remained

silent.

Hicca released a shaky breath as she took Ash's silence as his answer. "Don't ever speak to me again Ash," she said looking into his eyes and glaring. With that, she turned and started walking away. Toothless, who had been sitting to the side as Hicca and Ash spoke, followed after her with concern. He could feel the pain emanating from her and he was worried.

Ash watched Hicca walk away from him yet again. He knew that this time however, the odds of getting back into her good graces were slim to none. As felt like there weren't any other options and he was backed into a corner. So, Ash did what anyone or anything backed into a corner does. He decided to fight.

"Fight me Hicca," he said just loud enough for her to hear. He knew that Hicca had excellent hearing from her training and would catch it. He watched as Hicca paused and turned around to look at him. She raised an eyebrow at him in question.

"What?" she asked.

Slowly Ash stalked forward. "You heard me. Fight me," he repeated, adding a bit of acid to his demand.

"Why should I?" she asked as she looked up into Ash's eyes. "I've already beaten you twice in case you didn't remember. What do I have to prove?" she said while crossing her arms over her chest and scowling up at him.

"You won with tricks," Ash spat. "Let's have fair fight. In the daytime, no shadows and no poisons," he said harshly.

Hicca snorted and smirked at him. "That sounds like what a loser would say," she said smugly before turning on her heel and continuing toward the door.

Ash knew he had to keep egging her on. For what he had in mind, he needed her to fight him again. But he knew that insulting Hicca wasn't going to work. She was too used to it and too confident now for it to do anything for her. So he opted for a different approach.

"I guess I should expect gutlessness from people who hide in the shadows and wear ridiculous outfits," he called to her back. He was referring to Hicca's ninja clan. He knew that she held them in high regard and was hoping that a jab at them would get to her. When he saw Hicca stop at the door, he smiled in victory.

Having caught that jab, Toothless turned around and snarled at Ash. He was offended by it. He cared about the clan as much as Hicca did. They had been so kind to him and more importantly to Hicca. They had made her into the confident and strong woman he was proud to have as his partner. Hicca still hadn't turned around as she absorbed what Ash had said.

Ash knew the jab had gotten to her, all he had to do was give another little push. "What can you expect from freaks?" he said smugly before turning and walking back to his table. Ash waited for a response from Hicca as he walked. He got one in the form of a

shuriken whizzing passed him. Passing only a few inches from his face, it imbedded in a wooden pillar holding up the ceiling. With a smirk, he turned to face Hicca.

If looks could kill, Ash would be dead several times. The look Hicca was giving him was one of complete rage and hate. With her fists balled up and at her sides, Hicca stalked forward. Ash knew what he had done was low, but he didn't care. He watched as Hicca finally made her way to him before standing in front of him and glaring. He could feel the malice coming off her as her death gaze bored into his eyes.

"Take that back," Hicca said through gritted teeth.

"Then fight me. Prove you can beat me anytime and anywhere in a fair fight. But should I win, you stay on Berk. You stay on Berk, rejoin the tribe, and you become my bride," he added.

Hicca's eyes widened and her mouth fell open in shock at what he was proposing. She recovered from her shock and returned to her glaring before responding, "What makes you think I'd ever agree to that?" she said in outrage.

"What's the matter Hicca? Scared that what you clan taught you wasn't enough? That you still as weak as you've always been," he said with venom.

Hicca grit her teeth in anger. Ash had gone too far. She knew that he was baiting her, but she was too angry to care. If he wanted a fight then he was going to get one. "Fine. I accept," she said coolly.

Ash smiled to himself. His plan had worked.

"But when I win," Hicca said drawing his attention. "You don't speak to me, look at me, or even thing about me. As far as I'm concerned, we won't exist to each other. Deal?" she asked. "You accept the fact that I will never be yours. That my heart will never belong to you," she added vehemently.

Ash hesitated at this. She had changed the rules. If Ash lost this, which was highly possible, he would have to give up on her completely. Still, Ash had gone this far, he had no choice but to see this through. "Deal. Two days from now, midday, no weapons, just hand to hand, in the old kill ring," he offered.

After processing the terms of the fight, Hicca nodded before turning to walk away. Toothless remained and glared at Ash for another moment. Then he hissed at him before turning and following after Hicca.

Ash watched her go. His body tense and rigid from their confrontation. When Hicca and her dragon finally exited the hall he released a breath and his shoulders sagged. All around the great hall his tribesman were staring at him in shock. They couldn't believe that Ash had just challenged the chief's daughter to a fight. Everyone was aware that Ash had been courting her, how could things have gotten this bad?

Suddenly Ash felt something smack him in the back of the head. Turning around, he was met with the glare of an angry Gobber. "Why

did you mention the runes lad? You had her," he cried in frustration.

As Ash opened his mouth to speak Stoick came forward and interrupted. "What do you think you're doing Ash? Challenging my daughter to a fight? Or you mad lad?" He said angrily.

"I know, I know," Ash said with a groan. He brought up a hand to rub his temples. Everything that had just occurred was settling in. He hated himself for what he had done. The look of pain in her eyes was stabbing him in the heart. "But if I win, Hicca will rejoin the tribe," he said looking up to Stoick. Once she was officially a member and they were married, he would tell her. He would spend the rest of his life proving it to her.

Stoick held his gaze with narrowed eyes. Shaking his head he released a breath. He did want Hicca to rejoin the tribe. But not like this. "I hope you know what you're doing lad," he said lowly.

Ash didn't respond. He was focused on his upcoming fight with Hicca. He had to win this or he would lose her forever.

* * *

><p>It was the day of the fight. The majority of the village was above the kill ring. They were anxiously awaiting the fight between Hicca and Ash. They wondered who would win the fight. From what they'd heard, Hicca had managed to beat Ash twice already. The crowd was divided on who they wanted to see win. Many wanted Hicca to rejoin the tribe, but others felt that this wasn't the right way to go about it.<p>

In the center of the ring Ash stood with his arms crossed over his chest. He stared at the entrance of the ring as he was waiting for Hicca to enter. It was already midday and he wondered where she was. He didn't think Hicca would run from a fight. He contemplated going to find her when a murmur went through the crowd. He shifted his gaze to them and noticed that they were looking at something approaching the entrance of the ring. Looking back to the entrance, he saw Hicca enter. Her face was steely and she looked determined.

As she entered, Gobber, who had been standing off to the side walked up to greet her. "Hicca. How nice of you to show up," he said jokingly. Hicca looked at Gobber and nodded to acknowledge him.

"I just had to remove some of my weapons and my chainmail shirt," she explained. Standing a few feet from Ash she began to remove her dragon claws. She wanted to make this a fair a fight as possible. She had taken out all her hidden weapons that were in her outfit. She also opted to wear regular fur boots instead of her steel toed leather boots. She kept her gloves on, as she didn't think they would give her too much of an edge. She handed her claws over to Gobber, who took them, before turning back to face Ash.

"Alright. Everyone settle down!" Stoick called from above the ring. The villagers immediately went silent at his words. "This battle is to be hand. The loser will be the one who surrenders or can no longer continue. You are not to try and kill each other," he said lowly. "Are the rules understood?" he asked looking to both combatants. When they nodded in confirmation he signaled the start of the match.

Gobber stepped to the edge of the ring and out of the way. Above the ring, Toothless stood between some Vikings and watched his rider. He hoped she wouldn't be hurt.

Everyone watched anxiously as Hicca and Ash circled each other. They all remained silent as they wondered how this match would play out.

* * *

><p>Ash and Hicca circled each other warily. Ash was being very careful in engaging Hicca. He opted for hand to hand combat because he believed it was his best option. Hicca was simply too skilled and had a wide variety of weapons to choose from. He figured that with his greater strength and longer reach he could take her. He also spent the time before the fight talking to the elder and Fishlegs about what nerves he had to protect to keep Hicca from taking him down with one strike.<p>

Hicca was entirely calm as she and Ash circled each other. She had beaten him before and was confident she could do it again. She had proven that she was superior to him in hand to hand combat already. Yet despite her confidence, she was conflicted on the inside. She didn't want to fight Ash. Not like this at least. She had just wished that Ash felt something genuine for her. But she was determined to win this fight. No one would force her to marry against her will.

After minutes of circling and waiting for the other to make the first move, Ash stopped and put his hands up. Hicca brought her own hands up and got into a battle stance. They locked eyes and waited. The crowd held their breath as they waited to see who would strike first.

Ash finally took the initiative and threw a jab at Hicca's face. She easily sidestepped his punch and threw one of her own, but Ash simply took a step back and out of her reach. Like he had anticipated, his longer reach gave him a slight advantage, making up for his inferior hand to hand skill. He waited and watched for Hicca to strike. She did, taking a step forward she threw several quick jabs at his face. Ash responded by bringing his arms together and putting them in front of himself to block. He blocked several of her punches before Hicca changed tactics and struck him in the stomach below his guard. It wasn't enough to knock the air out of him, but it hurt and he took step back to recover. Hicca advanced on him and threw a left cross, striking him in the face and making him stumble back and face away from her.

With his back to her he heard Hicca advancing on him. Quickly he spun counterclockwise and lashed out with his left hand. This caught Hicca by surprise and he managed to back hand her across the face. She stumbled back and brought her hand to her cheek. Ash took advantage of her surprise and charged forward. He threw right cross, hoping to end the fight and knock her out but Hicca brought up her left arm and blocked before bringing up her right arm and driving her right palm into underside Ash's chin. Ash released a grunt of pain as he took a step back. Hicca threw a right cross that connected with his jaw and made him stumble to the side. As he lashed out at her she ducked and came behind him and jabbed him in his lower back. Ash released a cry of pain before whirling around to try and strike her. But she ducked

before kicking him in his lower left thigh. Ash grimaced but quickly grabbed Hicca's leg with his left hand and trapped it against his thigh. Then reached out with his right hand and grabbed Hicca by the front of her Shozoku. With a grunt of exertion he lifted Hicca off the ground before turning and throwing her across the ring. Hicca was surprised by Ash's surprise counter as she flew through the air. She impacted with the ground on her right shoulder and rolled to disperse the force. As she got up and looked back at Ash she was immediately struck across the face with a hard punch. While she was down Ash had charged her and thrown a punch which he hoped would be hard enough to knock her out.

Hicca was spun by the force of his blow. Her ears were ringing and the cobwebs in her head threatened to overwhelm her. She shook her head to clear it before refocusing on Ash. Luckily for her, Mayumi never pulled punches during their sparring sessions. Ash was surprised that Hicca was still standing. He was sure that punch would have knocked her out. He figured a punch like that would have knocked most Vikings out. However he noticed that Hicca looked unsteady on her feet and he decided to capitalize on it. Swinging at her left Hicca ducked and punched him in the stomach. He bent over only slightly before bringing his hands together and bringing them down on her back. The force brought Hicca to her knees and Ash tried to knee her in the chest. Hicca blocked by crossing her arms in front of her and pushed Ash away. Ash regained his balance and took a few steps back. He rubbed his stomach and took deep breaths as he gasped for air.

Hicca took deep breaths to clear her head. Slowly she got back on her feet and looked up at Ash. They were both getting tired. Hicca honestly didn't know if she could outlast Ash in a fight. Fighting Ash wasn't like fighting the Japanese. Ash was bigger and stronger than the Japanese people, all Vikings were. Ash's strength also made it difficult to grapple him as it would be hard to overcome his musculature. She needed to end this fight.

Both opponents locked eyes with each other and waited. Above them, the crowd was silent as they watched the fight. They didn't like this fight. Something about it just didn't feel right. They just wanted it to be over.

Stoick thought the same thing as he watched from his seat. He honestly didn't know who he wanted to win. If Ash won, Hicca would stay and rejoin the tribe. But then he would have to marry her against her will and he didn't want that. Plus losing meant she would be getting hurt and he was barely holding himself in his seat as he watched Ash strike her.

As Hicca looked at Ash, she started formulating a plan of attack. Without warning she charged at Ash at full speed. Ash was caught off guard by her sudden move but recovered quickly before attempting to strike her with his fist. As it looked like he was about to connect with her face Hicca ducked under the blow and kept going. Ash was surprised by the move but chased after her. He noticed Hicca running toward the wall of the ring and immediately skidded to a stop. He guessed at what she was doing. Just like in the forest when she ran up the tree and caught herself on his shoulders. He watched and waited for Hicca to run up the wall and push off. He would be ready when she landed and grab her.

Unfortunately for Ash, Hicca wasn't planning to repeat her move from the forest. She knew Ash would be expecting this move, so she opted for another. When she was within a few feet of the wall she leapt at it. Planting both feet against the wall she tensed her legs and pushed off. Twisting her upper body around, her lower body followed and she struck Ash across the jaw, hard. Ash stumbled back and tasted blood in his mouth. But Hicca didn't let up. Taking a breath, she closed her eyes and focused. Feeling the adrenaline surge through her, she opened her eyes and the world slowed to a crawl around her.

Knock the air out of him. Hicca charged forward and threw a fist into Ash's stomach with enough force to knock the air out of him. Ash let out a grunt of pain and gasped for breath. _Dislocate shoulder._ She grabbed Ash by the back of the neck with her right hand and pulled him down. Ash she did this, she used her left hand to grab Ash's right arm before raising it to shoulder level and extending it. Then she brought her knee up into Ash's armpit. She heard the pop indicating that Ash's shoulder had come out of its socket. Ash cried out in pain as he managed to push himself away from Hicca. He brought his other hand to massage his dislocated shoulder. He was in a lot of pain. This had happened to him before and he knew how to get it back in, but he doubted Hicca was going to sit around and let him. He glared up at Hicca and threw a jab with his left arm. _Break his hand._ Pulling her head back as Ash's fist approached, she threw her head forward and head-butted his fist. Ash broke a few fingers as it collided with Hicca's skull. He flapped his hand around as he looked at Hicca, who was smirking proudly while a red spot on her forehead started to form. With a growl Ash threw a right cross despite his arm screaming in protest. Hicca ducked and with a spin drove her elbow into his lower ribs on his left side. The same ribs she had cracked during their fight in the forest. They had healed but it still hurt like hell. Hicca advanced and kicked him in the chest causing him to stumble back. Then Hicca drove her fingers into Ash's deltoid, striking at a nerve cluster. Ash's eyes widened as his left hung uselessly at his side. Before he could counter she kept up her assault and kept punching him in the face and chest. All these quick strikes forced Ash back against the wall of the ring.

The villagers gasped as Hicca gained the advantage and pounded Ash. One thought was going through all their minds. _DAMN! That boy is getting his ass kicked._

Full frontal assault, Hicca thought as she threw her punches at Ash. To anyone watching from above the ring Hicca's hands were a blur as she struck at the upper body and face. Ash couldn't do anything to defend himself as Hicca threw her flurry of punches. He started to cough up blood as Hicca pounded his upper body. Hicca didn't stop as blood started coming out of Ash's mouth. If she wanted to, Hicca could collapse Ash's ribcage. But even if she was mad at him, she didn't want to kill him. Pausing in her assault, she drove her knuckles on her right hand into Ash's nose, breaking it and causing blood to spill out of it. Grabbing Ash by the front of his tunic she pulled him forward slightly with her left hand punched him across the face with her right hand and then backhanded him on the other side. Then she pulled Ash away from the wall before spinning him around and pushing him toward the center of the ring.

End this. Hicca thought to herself. She looked to see Ash barely standing and wobbling on his feet. She walked up to him and stared

into his eyes. She glared at him for a moment before crouching and tensing her legs. Throwing her body backward into a backflip she struck out with her right leg, striking Ash in the underside of his chin with her heel. Still turning she struck out with her left leg and hit him in the jaw once again with her left heel. Ash was knocked off his feet and fell flat on his back. With his brain shaken at the force of her blows Ash blacked out. Hicca landed on her feet in a crouch before rising to her full height and surveying Ash. When the world around her came back to normal speed she was exhausted. She had never used her fit for such a long time. Scowling down at Ash she waited for Gobber to limp over to him before kneeling down to examine him.

After a few moments Gobber looked up to Stoick and nodded. Confirming that Ash was out. Stoick nodded back before rising in his seat and clearing his throat.

"Hicca wins," he called out to the villagers. No one cheered at Hicca's victory. It's not that they didn't want her to win, but they didn't like this fight.

Hicca didn't care that no one cheered for her. She only cared that she had won. She wasn't going to be forced to marry Ash. Turning on her heel, she slowly trudged her way out of the ring, not bothering to get her claws back from Gobber. When she exited, Toothless was waiting for her. He crooned at her in concern before crouching down to allow her to get on. She mounted and gave him the signal to go. Toothless obliged and took to the air. He could sense pain within his rider even though she had won. He decided that a flight would be what she needed now instead of going straight back to the cove.

As Hicca faced forward on the back of Toothless, she felt her heart breaking. Moisture started to cloud her vision and her chin started to wobble out of her control. Baka. She thought to herself, referring to Ash. She hadn't wanted this. She had wanted him to like her. To feel something for her.

"Why couldn't he just like me hun'?" She asked Toothless as a tear escaped her eyes and ran down her cheek. Toothless only crooned in answer. He wished he could give her an answer.

As they continued to fly out toward the ocean, she looked back toward Berk. Suddenly it wasn't feeling like a place to call home anymore.

* * *

><p>Poor Hicca. Stupid Ash

14. Chapter 14

****Small Step****

It was a week and a half after the fight between Ash and Hicca. Everyone could see the change in Hicca's demeanor. She was pulling away from the tribe. Before the fight Hicca walked through the streets as if she was a villager. She would strike up conversation with them, smile at them, and joke with them. But now, Hicca only ever came into town to eat, ask about Siver, and continue her lessons

with her peers. Then she would immediately head back to the cove without acknowledging anyone.

Her interactions with Ash had become nonexistent. Ash was a man of his word and didn't speak to her anymore. When they passed by each other, they kept their gazes straight ahead without giving the other a glance. Ash was heartbroken, he hated himself for not telling her how he felt. Now he had dug his own grave by fighting her. Now he would never have her, and it was all his fault. His mom had tried to encourage him to let her find him a wife again, but he firmly rejected her offer. If he couldn't have Hicca, he would rather be alone.

Hicca was as heartbroken as Ash. She had wanted there to be something between them. If Ash had said he liked her, she would have been the happiest girl in the world. But instead, it was all about the runes. All about following the Viking way. Hicca wouldn't be with anyone just because 'fate' determined they were supposed to be together. Hicca made her own fate. She had been doing that since she met Toothless and left the tribe.

Stoick who had been noticing Hicca's withdrawal from the village was growing concerned. He was getting worried she would decide to leave. He had to do something. He had been trying to give her space since she didn't seem too fond of speaking to him, but he didn't want her to leave. During one of her visits into the village he invited her over to share a meal with him. To his surprise, she accepted. She agreed to come over at sundown and eat dinner with him. Stoick immediately rushed back to his house and prepared beef broth with some bread. He also grabbed a basket of fish for her dragon, hoping she would appreciate the gesture. With everything set up, he sat down and nervously awaited for Hicca to arrive. Hicca and he hadn't shared a meal at this table together for a long time. Hopefully, if this dinner went alright, he could change that.

* * *

><p>After a few hours, Hicca arrived. When he answered the door he was surprised to see her in an outfit that looked just like the one she wore as a kid. It was surprising to see her out of his ninja outfit. He invited her inside and she entered with Toothless coming in after her. Taking the stew of the fire he prepared them both a bowl of the broth and gave her dragon the basket of fish. She thanked him for feeding her dragon and they sat down to eat. They were both silent as they ate, with only the sound of wood on wood as they ate.<p>

Deciding to break the silence, Stoick spoke up. "So Hicca," he began nervously. When she looked up from her bowl at him he continued. "Have you decided if you want to rejoin the tribe or not? Because the elders have all agreed that you can rejoin" he said hopefully.

Hicca paused for a moment and lowered her spoon full of broth back into the bowl. Releasing a breath she looked into Stoick's eyes before answering. "That's actually why I decided to come tonight Stoick," she said while holding his gaze. "I think I'm just going to leave. Probably sooner than later," she answered with a shrug.

Stoick's stomach dropped to his feet. This was his worst nightmare,

he had to try and stop her. "Hicca I know that things with Ash didn't work out, but that's no reason to leave," he said frantically.

Hicca shook her head before answering. "It doesn't have anything to do with Ash. I just don't belong here. I never have," she said sadly.

"Of course you do Hicca. You're a Viking and this is your tribe," Stoick pressed.

"No I'm not. I never have been. But that's ok. Everything that made me a terrible Viking makes me a great ninja," she said with a small smile. "Besides, the village is more than capable of taking care of itself. One person won't make much of a difference. It's not my business anyway," she said with a shrug.

Stoick slammed his hand down on his table in frustration. "Stop pretending that we don't matter to you Hicca!" he shouted. Hicca's eyes widened before she set her face in a scowl. "You care about all of us Hicca. You came back to Berk, you came to save us. I can see it in your face when you walk through the village," he said with conviction.

Hicca frowned at Stoick and stood up. "Well maybe I don't care about this village. It's not like this village ever cared about me before the dragons. I had to tame a dragon and slay the biggest dragon in Viking history for everyone to finally not consider me as a nuisance and an outcast," she shouted back harshly. "On top of that, no one had even bothered to apologize to me. Is 'Hey, sorry Hicca' so hard to say?" she said with a snarl.

"Well can you blame them? You act so cold to everyone you make it seem like an apology wouldn't make a difference," Stoick retorted.

Hicca snorted before chuckling dryly. "You know what the funny thing is? I don't care about anyone else's apology. All that really matters, that ever mattered is yours," Hicca admitted.

Stoick paused as he took in what she just said. Looking down, he took a breath to calm himself. When he looked back up to Hicca's face his eyes widened in surprise. She was crying. Tears were running down her cheeks as her face was twisted in pain.

"How could you say that to me," Hicca whispered quietly. "How could you say I wasn't your daughter? We were supposed be all we had to each other. You were supposed to be my dad, you were supposed to love me no matter what," she said while her body racked with sobs. "How could you just cast me out?" she asked sadly.

Stoick watched his daughter cry while his heart clenched with guilt. He thought that she was no longer affected by this. Obviously he had been wrong. He didn't realize how badly he had hurt her by disowning her and exiling her. As he opened his mouth to speak, Hicca cut him off.

"Well you know what? I don't need you. I don't need this village, I don't need your 'Viking way'. I found my own way. The ninja way," she spat at him.

This made Stoick's rage boil over inside of him. It was one thing to be mad at the village and him. But to insult the way of their people. Her own people, her family, her ancestors. That was going too far. "Oh and the 'Ninja way' is so great. You hide in the shadows and kill people in their sleep. You're no better than Siver and his men," he shouted back.

Hicca's eyes widened as her father's words stabbed her in the heart. It's like he once gain disowned her. All that work she had done to be strong, he had just rejected and insulted. She had never felt so low. She had been right. Her father, her people, she would always be an outcast to them. An oddity. She didn't belong here and she never had.

"Well you don't have to worry about me anymore. Your little embarrassment to the Viking way will just disappear. I found a real family with the clan. Goodbye Stoick," she said before turning and running to the door. She tore it open and dashed out with Toothless right behind her.

Stoick immediately got up and attempted to call out to her. But when he reached the door, he saw that Hicca was nowhere to be seen. Gritting his teeth he punched a wall, splintering the wood. He was cursing himself on the inside. The words he had spoken were out of anger. He hadn't meant to say them to her. He had never hated himself as much as did now. He contemplated going after her, but he decided that it wasn't the best idea. Hicca obviously wouldn't want to see him right now. With a sigh, he prayed to the gods that she would still be on the island tomorrow. He hung his head sadly before he stepped back inside his house and closed the door behind him.

* * *

><p>At the cove, Hicca was sobbing uncontrollably as she buried her face into her dragon's neck and clung to him like her life depended on it. Toothless watched his human with concern. He felt helpless as he watched her wallow in her sadness.<p>

Finally after several minutes of nonstop crying, Hicca ran herself dry. Releasing a shaky breath she spoke, "Why did things have to go so wrong hun'?" she asked her companion. "Why can't they love me for me?" she asked referring to Ash and her father. Toothless warbled at her before nudging her cheek with his face. This got her to smile as she looked in the eyes of her faithful companion. "You'll always love me, right hun'?" she asked. Toothless warbled at her before nodding and licking her cheek lightly. He would always love her. He would stick by her no matter what.

Hicca smiled and wiped away her tears. "Thanks hun'," with a sad sigh she looked up at the crescent moon. She looked at it and thought it was beautiful. "We're gonna leave hun'. Tomorrow," she told her companion. He nodded in confirmation before settling down and letting his rider lean against him. Hicca hadn't wanted to leave until just recently. She had honestly considered staying. With all the ways Berk had changed, she figured she had a place here now. But she had been wrong. She and Toothless would move on and explore the world as they intended. Tomorrow she would do some maintenance on Toothless's saddle at Gobber's. Then they would go. But she would say goodbye to her father. She owed him that.

As she settled back against Toothless and relaxed, she felt her eyes getting heavy. She started to drift off to sleep when suddenly something caught her attention. Toothless released a growl as he heard the same thing. They both stood up and focused on their hearing. She heard men. A lot of them. She could hear weapons and armor clinking together as they marched around the cove and towards the village. She guessed that it was more of Siver's men. They were obviously trying to get the drop on the village. She felt a fire of rage burn within her as her desire to defend the village blazed to life.

"Come on hun', we're gonna help," she told her companion firmly. Toothless growled in confirmation. Hicca quickly ran to put on her ninja gear and grab her weapons.

No one was going to threaten her friends and get away with it. It was time to put her skills to use.

* * *

><p>As Stoick was sleeping in his chair a sudden roar from a dragon woke him up. Stoick immediately leapt up and grabbed his helmet. Bursting out of the front door of his home, he saw his people fighting with other Vikings from an unknown tribe. He immediately figured that Siver's men had obviously snuck into the village. Normally they could repel any attack with their dragons from afar, but inside the village the dragons couldn't use their fire without risking setting the village ablaze.<p>

Immediately he rushed into the fray and shouted orders to his people. He commanded the children and noncombatants be moved out of the village while all combatants secure the armory and start repelling the invaders. He watched as his people fought against the invaders and their dragons joined the battle as best they could.

Ash was currently engaged with a Viking wielding a large battle axe. Stormfly was also fighting as she lashed out at a group of five men a few yards away. Ash cursed himself at allowing himself to be disarmed. He was fighting with a handicap as the injuries he sustained from his fight with Hicca hadn't completely healed. Ash ducked as his opponent attempted to behead him. Dodging the blade he rose up and delivered an uppercut to the bigger man. It hurt him, but he was too big to be knocked off his feet. The man then jabbed the handle of his axe into Ash's ribs. The same ones Hicca had re-cracked. Wincing in pain, Ash knelt the man in the stomach before punching him across the face. The man went down and fell unconscious. Ash smirked to himself proudly. But his victory was cut short as he was sucker punched across his face from his left.

Stumbling to the side, he attempted to clear the cobwebs before facing his opponent. Unfortunately he was caught off guard as a larger Viking clotheslined him. Laid out flat on his back he was suddenly pinned as his opponent pinned his chest down with his right knee and trapped his arm beneath his foot. Ash struggled to break free as the man then grabbed him by the throat with his left hand and raised his sword. Ash realized the man was preparing to finish him off and fought his hardest to get free.

All around, Ash's friends were engaged in fights of their own. Ruffnut was near the armory, guarding the village's weapons at the

chief's orders. Her brother was at her side fending off enemies that came to close with a spear. Their dragon was fighting along with them, perched on top of the armory they shot fire blasts at any who dared to try and flank their riders. Putting her lessons with Hicca to good use Ruffnut hurled shuriken after shuriken at the rushing Vikings. She managed to kill a few by hitting them in the neck but many she just hit in the arms dealing shallow cuts. Unlike Hicca who covered her shuriken in poisons these enemies could keep fighting. Valiantly the siblings fought against the hordes of Vikings, hoping that their people could turn the tide.

Near the center of town, Snotlout, Fishlegs, their dragons, and a large group of Hooligans were engaged with the enemy. Fishlegs, who had never been much of a fighter was armed with a stone hammer that he swung at the enemies. His great strength allowed him to greatly injure any incoming enemies and his dragon Meatlug was batting them aside with her head and tail. Any who tried to shoot her rider with arrows she would blast and leap in front of him and use herself as a shield. With her hard, rocklike skin the arrows bounced off and she returned to battle. Snotlout and Hookfang were loving this fight. Snotlout lashed out with his war axe, dealing fatal blows to enemies while Hookfang would bite his enemies and fling them away with his jaws. Then he would bat them away with his wings and tail to keep them from his rider.

The chief was being swarmed by enemies intent on taking his head. But Stoick was much too stubborn to let them. Armed with only his fists, he lived up to the legends told about him as he beat and tossed his enemies around. Surveying the situation, he cursed when he saw that his people weren't winning. They weren't losing either but they needed a way to turn the tide. As he continued to scan the village his eyes stopped on a battle and his stomach dropped to his feet. Ash Hofferson was being pinned down by a Viking that looked ready to behead him. He shouted out for Ash and attempted to rush to his aid, but he was blocked by more men trying to kill him. He could only watch the horrible scene play out in front of him.

All around Ash's friends saw his distress. They desperately wanted to help him, but they wouldn't make it in time. They all shouted to him, telling him to break free, but it was no use. They watched as the Viking pinning him down was preparing to deal the death blow and all of their blood ran cold.

Ash grit his teeth in frustration as he tried to break free. He could hear Stormfly distressed cries as she probably was trying to get to him. With a last struggle, he finally gave up and accepted his fate. As his last act of defiance he glared up at the man pinning him down. And what he saw on the man's face confused him. He saw regret.

"I'm sorry about this lad," the man said to him quietly. This confused him. It's like the man didn't want to kill him. His confusion disappeared as the man was about to kill him. Ash's life flashed before his eyes and the only regret he had was not telling Hicca how he felt. With that, he waited for the man to send him to Valhalla.

Just as the man prepared to behead him, Ash was saved. From out of nowhere a black arrow was fired and pierced the man's chest. Stabbing him in the heart. The man's eyes widened as he got up off Ash and looked down at the arrow sticking out of his chest. He dropped his

sword to the ground with a clang before he fell backwards and died.

Ash immediately got up and rubbed at his neck. He looked around and tried to see where the arrow had come from. No Hooligan really used arrows as they had never been a practical dragon fighting weapon.

All around, the Hooligans were shocked to see the enemies being picked off by some unknown attacker. As an invader was about to attack Ruffnut, who had just run out of shuriken, an arrow pierced his sword arm, making him drop his weapon and cry out in pain. Ruffnut used this moment to pick up the man's sword and stab him with it, killing him. Then she scanned the area to try and find her savior.

As Fishlegs was about to be charged by a Viking wielding a war axe, a black shape suddenly grabbed him by the shoulders and lifted him off the ground. Fishlegs' jaw dropped open as he looked up to the skies. He wondered what had just happened and then it struck him, "Its Hicca!" he shouted in relief.

The invaders were getting scared as someone they couldn't see was attacking them from the shadows. One by one they were dropping as strange star shapes projectiles suddenly came out of nowhere and embedded in their necks and killed them. The Hooligans could only make out a black blur darting out from houses and dashing by the men before returning to the shadows. Then suddenly the men's throats started leaking blood as they had been slit. Two men felt a prick on the necks before their muscles locked up and they went down, unable to move and at the total mercy of the Hooligans.

Stoick tried to process what was happening. All the men surrounding him were suddenly being killed. One man that had been about to attack him was suddenly crushed as one of his comrades fell out of the sky and on top of him. From a nearby ally, a black chain shot out and wrapped around another man and pulled him into the shadows. As the last two men in front of him were preparing to attack two knives flew past Stoick head and hit both men in the eyes. They screamed in pain before Stoick took advantage of this and knocked them unconscious.

As Stoick looked around, he saw that his people had won. Most of the invaders had been killed and their throats had been slit. Other had shuriken embedded in them as they bled out from the stabs and cuts on their necks. Some even had arrows protruding from their necks and hearts.

"Hicca," Stoick whispered as he realized what was going on. She had helped them. Saved them once again.

"Is everyone alright?" Hicca called out as she stepped out of an alleyway and into the open. She stood in the center of town as people were rushing to thank her. She ignored them as Stoick pushed his way through the crowd and up to her.

"Hicca, what happened?" he asked.

"These people came from the rear of the island. I heard them heading towards the village so I came to help," she answered

Stoick nodded and thanked her before issuing orders to collect the bodies. The group around them dispersed and Hicca's peers came up to admire her. Ash stood off to the side. Hicca had saved him and he wanted to thank her. But he had made a promise not to speak to her. With a sigh he turned to walk away when suddenly a shout caught his attention.

"Die you monster!" a man shouted as he came out from behind a corner. He then drew a knife at his belt and hurled it at Hicca's head. Ash's heart stopped and his blood ran cold as Hicca suddenly fell to the ground.

All around, people witnessed the man's surprise attack on Hicca and gasped. It looked like the knife had hit her in the face before she fell to the ground. They watched as she remained motionless.

The man sneered at having killed the woman who had attacked his comrades. Then suddenly he was struck hard in the face. His attacker was Stoick, whose face was twisted into pure rage. Stoick lashed out at the man, intent on pummeling him to death. "HOW DARE YOU HURT MY DAUGHTER!" she shouted between swings. Every punch caused blood to come out of the man as his people tried to keep him from beating the man to death.

As Stoick was beating Hicca's attacker, Ash rushed to Hicca's side and knelt down beside her motionless form. He was at her back and he reached out to touch her, but hesitated. "Hicca. No," he whispered quietly. "Please Hicca. Get up. Please be ok. You have to be ok," he muttered desperately. "Please, I can't lose you gain. Not again," Ash choked out as he tried to hold back tears.

A roar suddenly caught everyone's attention. Looking up, they saw Toothless spiral down and land in front of Hicca. He looked worried for Hicca as he crooned in concerned. He came up to her front side. Inspecting her face, his expression suddenly changed. He released an annoyed groan and sat back on his haunches before huffing at Hicca's body.

"Toothless?" Ash said at his weird behavior. He was acting really strange for a dragon whose rider had died. Then suddenly, his eyes widened as Hicca sat up. Then she leapt to her feet before dusting herself off. Ash's mouth was hanging open as he saw that she ok. With her back still faced toward him, he couldn't see if the knife had done any damage. Suddenly Hicca turned around and he gasped at what he saw. Hicca had caught the knife in her mouth. There wasn't a scratch on her.

"Wow. Does anyone else think that it completely hot?" Tuffnut asked breaking the silence. All around, many male Vikings nodded their head in agreement, including Ash.

"Soâ€¦you're ok?" Ash asked Hicca.

Hicca spat out the knife before answering. "Yeah I'm fine," she said nonchalantly. Like she hadn't just done something amazing.

"But you fell to the floor," Fishlegs said confused.

Hicca only shrugged. "Just being dramatic," she answered

casually.

The rest of the crowd chuckled lightly at her answer. They were relieved to see she was ok. Ash released a sigh of relief as well. Then suddenly he noticed Hicca was staring at him. He flushed slightly at her intense gaze. She seemed to be searching his face for something as her eyebrows were furrowed in confusion.

"Ash?" Hicca began before someone interrupted.

"HICCA!" came the shout of Stoick. She turned to her father as he ran up to her. She was about to tell him she was ok when he suddenly grabbed her face with his hand, smashing her cheeks. Then he turned her face left and right as he inspected her for any signs of injury. When he saw none he smiled and let out a sigh of relief. Scooping her up into his arms, he gave her an intense hug. "Oh thank the gods you're alright," he said in relief.

Hicca's face flushed red in embarrassment at her father's show of concern. She squirmed futilely in his arms as he attempted to get free. "Dad. I'm ok. Gods dad. Will you stop? Everyone is staring at us, your embarrassing me," she said in protest. Hearing her call him 'dad' once again only made Stoick tighten his grip in happiness. After a few more seconds of struggling, Hicca gave up and let her father do as she pleased. Truth be told, she was actually very touched about his obvious concern.

When he was finally finished he set her down and smiled at her. She couldn't help but give him a small smile in return. "I'm so glad you're ok Hicca," he said honestly. Hicca nodded in response. Then she pointed out two men she had taken down with paralyzing darts so that they could be interrogated at a later time. Stoick nodded and ordered some of his men to remove the poisons they carried and lock them up.

Hicca released a yawn in exhaustion before looking up to her father. "Dad. Is it ok if I sleep in my old room tonight? I'm way too tired to go back to the cove," she asked the big man.

Stoick smiled warmly at her before answering, "Of course you can Hicca." When Hicca nodded at him gratefully, he turned and started walking toward his house. He could feel something had changed between him and Hicca just now. Their earlier fight had been forgotten. He felt they had taken a step in the road to reconciliation.

As Hicca was about to follow after her father, she paused and looked back to Ash who had just been standing off to the side. Meeting his eyes, she walked up to him and gave him a small smile.

"What?" Ash asked in annoyance at her smile. He didn't know what she wanted or why she was suddenly smiling at him.

"You were actually worried about me," Hicca said still holding her smile.

Ash flinched at her accusation before scoffing at her answer. "No I wasn't," he said averting his gaze by turning his head. He tried to look anywhere but at her face right now. She was making him blush like mad.

Hicca only smirked at his reaction. "Sure you weren't Ash," Hicca said teasingly.

Ash scowled in the direction he was looking. Then his eyes widened as he felt Hicca put her hand on his shoulders. Looking out of the corner of his eyes he saw Hicca stand on her toes before kissing him on the cheek lightly. He brought his hand to touch the spot she had just kissed before looking back to Hicca in bewilderment.

"Thanks for your concern Ash," Hicca said with a slight blush. "It wasâ€¦sweet," Hicca said giving him a warm smile. With that, she turned and started following after the chief with Toothless right behind her.

Ash watched her go in complete confusion. Did this mean they were speaking again? Why had she kissed him? Did he still have a shot with her? All these questions and more ran through Ash's mind as he watched the chief's daughter saunter away.

A small spark of hope lit up within him. He really hoped that Hicca had just given him another chance.

* * *

><p>As Stoick walked up to Hicca's old room he smiled to himself. His daughter was sleeping in her old bed once again. She had saved the village once more. He had been right. She cared about all of them, even if she wouldn't admit it. Even if she denied it, Hicca was a Viking, and expressing how one really felt was difficult for a Viking.<p>

As Stoick cracked open the door to Hicca's room, he saw her laying down on her bed fast asleep. Toothless was at the foot of the bed and he looked to Stoick curiously. Stoick nodded to the dragon before walking up to the side of the bed and pulling a blanket up to cover his daughter. She grabbed the blanket with one hand before pulling it up to her cheek. Stoick smiled at her sleeping face. She looked so peaceful and it reminded him of the days when she was a child. At that moment, Stoick was sure he could fix his relationship with his daughter. He had taken a small step today, but enough small steps could get you to your goal.

Walking back to the door he took one last look at his precious daughter. He thanked the gods that she had been returned to him. "Goodnight Hicca. I love you," he said quietly.

"Goodnight daddy," Hicca said in her sleep.

Hearing her call him that warmed his heart. With one last look he closed the door and let her sleep. Confident that she wasn't going to disappear anytime soon.

* * *

><p>Boom. New chapter. Hiccstrid is back baby Hope you like

****Revelation****

Hicca awoke the next morning as sunlight started pouring in through her window. Sitting up, she yawned and stretched as she took in her surroundings. She was initially confused by why she was in her old room when she remembered the events of last night. Throwing back her blanket she got up. Toothless heard her getting up and yawned before rising up on all fours. Stretching like a cat he shook himself awake and warbled at Hicca.

"Morning hun'," she said to her dragon with a smile. Then she turned and began making her way downstairs. Coming down the stairs, she peeked into the kitchen and saw her father eating at the table. After a moment of silent deliberation, she decided to speak to him.

"Dad?" she said just loud enough for him to hear.

Stoick paused in his eating and turned to look at her. He greeted her with a warm smile before speaking, "Ah Hicca. Good morning."

"Yeah morning dad," she said awkwardly. Fiddling with her hands she looked up to him shyly before speaking, "I'm going to go out now. I'd like to be there when you start interrogating the captives," she said as politely as she could.

"Of course Hicca," he said with a nod. "I'll send someone to fetch you when we're ready to begin," he said. Hicca nodded and started to make her way to the door. "Oh and Hicca?" Stoick called out to her before she left. When she turned to look at him, he cleared his throat and started fiddling with his hands nervously. "I'm sorry about what I said last night. I'm proud of the woman you've become," he said honestly.

Hicca smiled at her father. "I'm sorry about what I said too dad," she said with a nod. They held each other's gaze for a moment before Hicca turned and stepped out into the village. She stared heading straight for the academy with Toothless on her heels. Her mind was completely focused on their attackers. She had noticed somethings about them that were strange. She needed a quiet place to think about it. If she was right, there was more happening than what was meeting the eye.

* * *

><p>It was a few hour before midday when Ash was sent to retrieve Hicca for the interrogation. He initially protested being sent but Stoick had given him an order. Ash was a loyal soldier so he did as he was told. The other riders had followed him as he headed for the academy where the villagers said Hicca had gone. He was nervous about how their interaction would go. The kiss she had given him last night suggested they were on good terms once again, but he didn't want to get his hopes up.<p>

As his friend walked into the ring of the academy, they all raised their eyebrows curiously at what their comrade was doing. She was hanging upside down by her feet from the chains above the ring with her arms cross over her chest and her eyes closed. Her face looked to be deep in thought as she seemed to be thinking hard about something. Toothless was besides her, hanging by his tail and covering himself with his wings.

"Uhm. What ya doing Hicca?" Fishlegs asked inquisitively.

Hicca remained silent for a moment before she answered. "I'm thinking about something," she said blankly.

"While upside down?" Snotlout asked.

"It helps me think better," she answered simply.

The others exchanged glances and shrugged at her strange behavior.

"Anyway. The interrogation of the captives is about to begin Hicca. Your father told me to come and get you," Ash explained.

Hicca nodded and opened her eyes. As they all turned to walk away Hicca spoke up.

"Ash. Can we talk?" she said locking eyes with Ash. Ash quirked an eyebrow at her request but nodded. Hicca then unhooked her feet and dropped down to the floor. She landed in a crouch before standing upright. Then she glanced over to the others, "Alone if you don't mind," she said hoping they would get the hint. They did and left the ring. Leaving Ash, Hicca, and Toothless alone.

Hicca looked up to her partner who looking back at her curiously. "Can you give us a moment hun'?" she asked the dragon. The dragon huffed and complied. Drooping down to the floor he walked out of the ring and started making his way to the feeding stations for breakfast. With only Ash and Hicca in the ring, it was awkwardly quiet.

Ash waited for Hicca to say what she wanted before she started walking up to him. Standing directly in front of him, she put her hands behind her back and gave him a cheeky grin. Ash raised an eyebrow at her odd behavior. He tried his best not to blush as she continued to stare at him. Then she batted her eyelashes at him. Getting weirded out, he broke the silence.

"What? Why are you just looking at me like that?" he asked in annoyance.

Hicca just continued to smile at him. "You like me," she finally said.

Ash blushed at her accusation. "Iâ€|do not," Ash replied hotly. _Damn it man! She said the words for you. All you had to do was nod and you couldn't even do that! _He yelled at himself mentally.

But Hicca wasn't convinced. She continued to smirk at Ash and then decided to tease him. "Yes you do. I bet you think I'm gorgeous," she said. Ash frowned and turned his head away from her. "I bet you think about me all the time. I bet you want to kiss me and hold me," she pressed. Ash snorted like he was indifferent. "I bet you want me to have your babies," she said poking him in the arm playfully.

Ash remained silent and kept his expression neutral. His face was still red as Hicca had said exactly what he felt. He definitely thought she was beautiful. Without a doubt he wanted to hold her and

kiss her soft lips. And he most certainly did want her to be the mother of his children. But did she have to be so damn cocky about it?

Hicca watched as Ash kept his stoic expression. But she could hear his heart rapidly beating in his chest. He was nervous. She was making him nervous. "Ok. Tell me you like me, and I'll let you out of the deal," she offered.

"What?" Ash asked confused as he looked at her and furrowed his eyebrows. He didn't know what she was getting at.

"Say you like me and I'll let you court me again," she clarified.

Ash's heart soared at hearing this. Hicca was giving him another shot. He definitely wanted it. But his pride wouldn't allow him to come off as desperate. He didn't want to give Hicca the satisfaction of knowing she had this kind of effect on him. He snorted and kept his expression blank, "Pssh, who says I want to court you again?"

Hicca frowned at this. She could hear Ash's heart fluctuate. He was lying. She hadn't thought to listen to Ash's heartbeat before. She was too angry and hurt to even think about it. But now she could tell that he really did feel something for her. "Fine then. I guess I was wrong. I'll just go back to ignoring you," she said in a huff. Then she turned her nose up and walked around Ash.

"Nonononononono!" Ash cried frantically while he dashed in front of Hicca. "I do want another chance," he said desperate.

Hicca could hear his heart remain steady. He was telling the truth. "Then say it Ash. I need you to tell me that this," she paused to gesture to them both. "Is more than just the runes. I need you to be honest and say something genuine."

"I know," Ash snapped. Rubbing the back of his neck awkwardly he muttered under his breath, "I'm just not good with words."

"I hadn't noticed," Hicca said sarcastically. "But I need you to at least try if you want this to work," she added.

Ash knew this was it. It was sink or swim. Swallowing his pride deep he took a breath. He watched as Hicca looked at him expectantly. _Ok. Here we go_, Ash thought to himself nervously. Clearing his throat he opened his mouth, "I," he began. This was difficult. Feelings made Ash feel weak. He hated expressing them. But damn it, he would do it now. "Careâ€¦aboutâ€¦.youâ€¦deeply," he stammered out slowly. He was flushing red with embarrassment and he was sweating. He looked at Hicca and hoped that it had been enough. His heart dropped when he saw Hicca's expression was blank.

"I care about you deeply? Really Ash?" Hicca asked with a frown. Ash cast his eyes down in shame. "You really know how to make a girl feel special Ash," she said dryly. With a sigh she shook her head. At least he was trying. He deserved some points for that. "Well it's not exactly a ballad. But it'll do for now," she said to cheer him up. Immediately he raised his eyes up at her and smiled. Hicca took a step forward and continued to smile at him. Then without warning she

slapped him across the face. Ash stumbled back and looked up at her in confusion.

"That's for trying to force me into marrying you," she explained with a scowl.

Ash opened his mouth to retort, but then he closed it. Releasing a breath he rubbed the back of his neck in embarrassment. "Yeah I deserved that. Not one of my better moments," he said admittedly.

Hicca smiled at him before coming forward and placing her hands on his shoulders. Rising up on her tiptoes she kissed Ash on his other cheek. Pulling back, she giggled at his deep blush. "And that's for everything else," she said with a smile. "Now come on. I don't want to miss that interrogation," she said while stepping around Ash and walking toward the exit of the ring.

Ash had a goofy grin on his face as he watched her walk away. He then began following after her. He pumped his fist and cheered mentally at his good fortune. Hicca had given him another chance. He managed to say he liked her—kind of. All he had to do now was show her that he was trying.

I'm not gonna screw this up again, he told himself with conviction.

* * *

><p>Inside the cell of Berk's jail, Stoick, Spitelout, Ash, Hicca, and Gobber were interrogating one of their captives. They'd been trying to get him to tell them Siver's whereabouts for about half an hour and they hadn't gotten anything. The only thing the man had told them is that his name was Gnash Throatbiter. Stoick's patience was wearing thin at his noncompliance. He was at his wits end.<p>

"I'll ask you one more time. Where is Siver?" Stoick asked with a growl. He needed to find him. His people were being put in danger every second he was out there.

"I don't know anything," Gnash muttered with a scowl. He shifted his gaze to the ground and remained silent.

Stoick was seriously contemplating beating the man when Hicca, who had remained silent the whole time, spoke up.

"He's telling the truth dad," she said at his side.

Stoick turned to her and raised an eyebrow. "You believe him? He's obviously lying Hicca," he retorted unconvinced.

"I thought that too. But all this time his heart has remained steady when he answered. He really doesn't know," she explained. At her father's clear disbelief, she elaborated. "Part of my training was to live six months without my sight. Completing that training pushed my other senses beyond their limits. When people lie I can hear their heart fluctuate, but his hasn't," she explained. The others raised their eyebrows in skepticism. Living six months without sight seemed unbelievable, but they decided to leave it alone.

"Dad. I don't think he's a Scarred One at all," Hicca added.

"You don't know what you're talking about lass. Of course I am," the man growled as he raised his eyes from his feet.

Hicca turned to meet his eyes. "You're lying. You're heart fluctuated. I'm right aren't I?" she pressed. The man only looked away and remained silent. Hicca turned back to Stoick before reaching into a pocket in her Shozoku. "I found this on one of the men from the 30 ships that attacked before," she said presenting the medallion to Stoick. Stoick took it in his hands to examine. "The symbol look familiar?" Hicca asked seriously.

Stoick eyed the symbol curiously. It looked like a skull with a singular bone going through it. Holding it out to Gobber and Spitelout, they examined it themselves.

"The Bumbling Boneheads?" Gobber said in confusion.

The adults all exchanged glances before Stoick looked back to Hicca. "What are you thinking Hicca?" Spitelout asked.

"I think that some of the men who attacked us before were of the Bonehead tribe. I couldn't be sure, I mean it could have simply been a trophy from battle but now I'm positive. Siver is turning the other tribes against us," she said seriously.

The others all widened their eyes at Hicca's theory. Stoick immediately whirled around to face their captive. Stepping forward he reached out a hand and pulled up the man's right sleeve. On the man's shoulder, was another familiar symbol. "A Loudmouth?" he shouted indignantly. He glared at the man before continuing, "What have we ever done to you? We've always had friendly relations with your tribe." The man just kept his gaze down. But this time, they all saw something in his face. Shame.

"I have another theory dad," Hicca said stepping forward. Stoick looked at her inquisitively and she elaborated. "Correct me if I'm wrong dad, but the Loudmouth tribe is a lot like ours correct? I mean they have women who are warriors, who join in battle, who go on raids?" she asked. Stoick considered this for a moment before nodding. Hicca then turned to Ash, "Ash. Has there ever been any women among the raiders you've been repelling all this time?"

Ash tapped his chin in thought as he tried to remember. Then his eyes widened as he realized he'd never seen a woman among them. He hadn't thought much of it until now, but suddenly it seemed very strange. "No," he answered while shaking his head.

Hicca could hear the man's heart beat speed up. She's was getting close to the truth. "Don't you think that's odd? Not one shieldmaiden among them?" The others let her words sink in. She took a step towards the man and locked eyes with him. "Siver must have something on you to make you turn against a friend," she said while listening to his heart. It was beating rapidly in his chest. "He has your wives and children doesn't he?" she finally asked. The man's heart suddenly slowed down. Hicca had found the truth.

The man's shoulder's sagged as he looked up to Stoick. "I'm so sorry Stoick. It's true, he's got our families. He's threatened to kill

them if we don't attack and bring back your head," the man muttered miserably.

Stoick's anger spiked and he balled his fists at his side. Siver was even more of a coward then he thought.

"You're all cannon fodder. He sends you to chip away at Berk's defenses while his men are perfectly safe. He doesn't have to waste any of his own resources. Then he orders you to poison yourselves if you're caught so you can't reveal anything," Hicca stated. Gnash nodded in head in horrible confirmation.

"What do we do Stoick," Gobber asked. "It was different when we believed it was just Siver's men. But these are our friends we're fighting against."

"I know Gobber. But I can't just let Berk be attacked," Stoick said while rubbing his eyes. He couldn't believe they'd been fighting against their allies the entire time. He hated Siver more than ever now.

As Stoick, Gobber, and Spitelout were conferring, Hicca walked up to the captive man. He looked up to her, absolutely miserable. Hicca felt sympathy for the man. He was only trying to protect his family. He didn't deserve this. She had to help him.

"I'm sorry for killing your comrades last night. But it was either us or you," Hicca said honestly. Stoick, who had stopped to observe her, smiled to himself at Hicca's use of 'us'. She was identifying herself as a Hooligan again. "I don't know if you can ever forgive me, but if you'll let me, I want to help," she said in earnest. She held his gaze to let him see the truth in her eyes.

"What do you think you can you do lass?" Gnash asked skeptically.

"I want to find and free your families. All of them," Hicca said with conviction. "But to do that, I need a lead. Can you tell me where I can start?" Hicca asked.

The man remained silent for a moment. He searched her face to see if she was telling the truth. He almost couldn't believe that this girl was willing to help him. He had tried to kill her chief, her father only the night before. But he didn't want to serve Siver. He didn't want to be a pawn and most of all, he wanted his wife and child back.

He made a decision to trust this girl. Taking a breath, he looked into her eyes. "We hired someone to look for our families. He said he found a lead on the island of the Hagglers," he told her.

"Who is this man? Where can I find him?" Hicca asked. She needed as many details as she could get.

"He calls himself 'Odin's Raven'. We were supposed to meet him at Loki's tavern," he answered. "Find the Raven lass. Free our families. Please," he begged.

Hicca took in all the information and held the man's gaze. "I will. I promise," she said resolutely.

* * *

><p>"I don't know about this Hicca," Stoick said. The group had moved to the great hall after their interrogation. Hicca had informed him of her plan to find the families of the other tribes and he wasn't sure if he was ok with Hicca going.<p>

"This is a good plan dad," Hicca insisted. "If I can find and free the families, Siver won't have anything to turn the other tribes against us. That mean that he'll have to come after us himself. Which means he'll have to come out of hiding," Hicca said, driving her point home.

Stoick was still reluctant, this was dangerous. "I still don't know. This is dangerous. How do you know you can find them?" he asked her.

"I've done this kind of stuff before dad. I've been trained for this," Hicca stated. Seeing his hesitance, she crossed her arms and looked at him sternly. "I'm going dad. Now I want you to be ok with this, but I don't need your permission," she sated calmly.

Stoick frowned at this. She was right. She still technically wasn't a member of the tribe. Stoick couldn't order her to remain on the island. Plus he saw her reasoning. Her logic was sound, if she could find and free the families, they would be closer to finding Siver. With a sigh, he relented, "Ok Hicca. But I want the riders to go with you," he said firmly.

Hicca remained silent while she mulled over his condition. With a nod, she agreed. Then she looked to Ash, who had been standing off to the side. "Ash, let's get the others. We leave immediately." Ash nodded and they exited the hall to gather up their friends.

Stoick watched her go and smiled to himself. His daughter had grown into such a strong and capable women. She was utterly confident she could do this. But as a father, it was only natural he would worry about her. Still, he had to have faith in her. He needed to show it.

He owed it to her.

An hour later, the riders were gathered in the town square and set to go. They had packed all they needed and had agreed that Hicca would lead the mission. As the riders were preparing to leave, they paused as Stoick came to see them off.

Stoick walked up to Hicca, who was atop Toothless. He had never been good with words, but he wanted to wish her luck. "Good luck Hicca. Be safe and be careful," he told her.

Hicca nodded at his words and smiled. "I will dad," she said. She paused and held his gaze. Clearing her throat, she spoke, "I'll be back, definitely," she said with a nod.

"And I'll be here, probably," he said back with a smile.

With that, Hicca gave Toothless the signal to go. He leapt into the sky with the other riders and dragons following close behind. She was completely focused on the mission. She had to save those families.

She couldn't let innocent people suffer. Not when she had the power to stop it.

But first, she had to find this Raven.

* * *

><p>In a day and a half the riders arrived of Njǫrðr Island. They could have arrived sooner, but one of their company was a Gronckle, and they weren't the fastest of dragons. Arriving in the cover of darkness, Hicca led them to the cave she had hidden Toothless in during her previous visits to the island. When they dismounted in the cave and unsaddled their dragons, Hicca had Snotlout replace his belt since it had the symbol of the Jorgenson clan. A clan with known ties to Berk.<p>

After he had complied, she ushered the others out of the cave so she could change. After a few minutes, she emerged in her Viking attire. The others did a double take when they saw her. It was weird to see her out of her ninja outfit.

"You don't feel naked out of your ninja outfit?" Ash asked her.

Hicca shrugged. "A little. But it stands out too much. Gotta go unnoticed," she said. The other nodded in understanding. "Besides, I still have my weapons on me," she said with a smile.

The others looked at her skeptically. They couldn't make out any weapons on her. The others were carrying obvious weapons. The twins had spears, Ash had his axe, Snotlout had a sword, and Fishlegs had a hammer. It was normal to see a Viking with weapons and thus opted to keep them.

"Where are they?" Ash asked curiously.

Hicca threw Ash a smoldering smile. Then she sauntered up to him and placed her hands on her hips. "Why don't you search me Ash? You have my permission," she said in a sultry voice.

Ash flushed red at her suggestion. Hicca was being very flirtatious, and it drove him crazy. He looked her up and down to locate a weapon. He couldn't see any. He was contemplating reaching out and grabbing her when the other started making gaging noises.

"Why don't you too just make out already?" Ruffnut asked in disgust.

Hicca frowned at the girl before taking a step back. "Alright guys. Let's go," she ordered as she led the others in the direction of the village.

* * *

><p>After arriving in the village, it took them about half an hour to find Loki's Tavern. It was a large wooden building and the sound of very active people could be heard coming from inside. It sounded like quite the rowdy establishment.<p>

"Ok everyone. When we get inside, try to find someone who's sitting

alone but near a group," Hicca ordered. She figured that they needed to find someone who was alone and trying to listen in on others. The others nodded in understanding.

With that, she opened the door and they stepped inside. All around people were laughing, drinking, and fighting. There was a stage at the front of the room and many circular tables for the guests while serving girls roamed among the room to meet the needs of the customers. They were ignored by the other patrons while a serving girl welcomed them and told them they could seat anywhere and that she would be with them shortly. They all nodded and started making their way through the tables while they scanned the room.

They couldn't find a character that seemed out of place until Fishlegs spoke up.

"Guys, is that who I think it is?" Fishlegs asked while pointing to a corner of the room. The others looked to where he was pointing and their eyes settled on a man wearing a hooded cloak. Upon closer inspection, the hood was down and they could make out some features.

"Oh gods. Please don't let that be who we're looking for," Ash said in exasperation. The man looked to be about their age. He had shiny black hair that went down to his shoulders and a goatee. He was someone they had met before. And they shared a less than pleasant history.

Taking the lead, Ash led the group to the table. When they reached it, the man was staring down at his mug full of mead and ignoring them.

"Hello! Heath," Ash said coolly.

The man looked up in surprise. Now that they were a lot closer to him, they could definitely tell it was Heath. He had the same green eyes and he had matured since the last time they had seen him.

"Ash?" the man said with furrowed eyebrows. When he inspected Ash's face further, his broke into a smile. Leaping up he came around the table and threw his arms around Ash. A gesture the blonde didn't appreciate. "Ash you sum' bitch! How the Hel have you been," he said jovially as he released Ash. Heath had grown. He now stood only about an inch shorter than Ash. He looked to be only slightly less muscular than him and he kept a sword at his hip.

"Decent," Ash blankly. He didn't hate Heath. But he didn't necessarily like him either.

"And I see the rest of the riders are here," Heath added as he looked passed him. "What's up guys? Good to see you Snot, Ruff, Tuff, Legs, and," he paused as his eyes fell on Hicca. "Well hey there. I don't think we've met," he said with a sly grin to Hicca. He extended his hand for Hicca to shake.

Hicca reached out and took his hand. Giving it a shake, she introduced herself, "My name is Hicca. It's nice to meet you," she said politely.

Heath's eyes suddenly widened as her name sounded familiar. "You're Hicca? THE Hicca? The first person to train and fly a dragon? A Night Fury at that? That Hicca?" he asked in disbelief. When Hicca nodded in confirmation, he couldn't believe it. He had heard the stories about her. He was truly honored to meet her. "It's an honor to meet you milady," he said still holding her hand. Then he bent down and kissed her hand. Hicca blushed slightly and smiled at him.

Ash's eyes narrowed at Heath. He didn't like the way he was smiling at Hicca. Or touching her hand. _Urge to kill, rising,_ he thought to himself as his fingers twitched for his axe.

"So what are you guys doing here?" Heath asked inquisitively.

"What are you doing here?" Ash shot back.

"I'm free to do and go where I please Ash," Heath said with a shrug.

"We're getting off topic," Hicca said interrupting. Looking Heath in the eyes she asked him the next question that was on everyone's mind. "Heath, are you the Raven?" she asked seriously.

Heath's eyes narrowed as he placed a hand on the hilt of his sword. "Who wants to know?" he asked dangerously.

"We're her about the missing wives and children of the Loudmouth tribe, among others. We were sent by Gnash Throatbiter," she answered calmly.

At hearing this Heath relaxed and dropped his hand from the sword. "Then you've found who you're looking for. Let's take a seat and I'll fill you in on what I've found," he offered while gesturing to the table.

The riders all nodded and made their way to the table. Ash also did this begrudgingly. He noticed the way Heath looked at Hicca. He didn't like this. Heath could be charming, he was going to have to keep his eyes on him.

He grit his teeth and clenched his fists when he saw him pull out a seat for Hicca. Which happened to be right next to him. He growled lowly as he saw Hicca smile gratefully at him and Heath smile back.

_Definitely gonna keep my eyes on you, _Ash thought as he took the seat at Hicca's left.

With everyone settled down, Heath began to fill them in on what he had found. The other listened intently. Hicca processed the information as she began formulating what their next objective should be.

They had completed the first part of the mission. Locate the Raven. Now the hard part was going to begin.

* * *

><p>Hope you like this chapter. Evryone like what I did with Heath? Starting to pick up the story now. Reviewer J.E.M. or

BereniceAlpha1, hope this makes you happy

16. Chapter 16

****Phase Two****

"So after asking around, I got a tip from the Bob Burglars to come here. Supposedly some Scarred Ones are regularly stationed here. They were right," Heath told the group just loud enough for them to hear. He had their full attention as he brought them up to speed.

"Find anything else out?" Hicca asked.

Heath turned to her and grinned. "Of course milady. I'm very thorough," he told her with a wink. "Anyway, there are three Scarred Ones that live on this island. I've been shadowing them for weeks to learn the location of the captured families," he explained while pausing to take a sip of mead.

"What did you find?" Ash asked, really wishing Heath would get to the point. And stop smiling at Hicca.

"I'm getting to that," Heath told Ash to calm him. "Apparently they keep the captives on different islands and move them to another island every couple weeks. Like on a schedule," he explained. "Luckily, one of the Scarred Ones on this island happens to keep a map with a schedule of when and where the prisoners are held at any given time," he elaborated.

"So why haven't you taken it?" Snotlout asked crossing his arms over his chest.

"If only it were that easy," Heath responded with a sigh. "The three are together at all times. Swiping it is near impossible. They're always on guard," Heath explained.

"We could just kill them and take it," Ruffnut offered.

"No," Hicca cut in. "Their deaths could be linked back to Berk after we rescue the families. If the Hagglers find out, we'll lose our friendly relations with them," she explained. The Hagglers forbade any tribal disputes on their island. If a member of a tribe committed an act of aggression the whole tribe would be prohibited from returning to their island. The Haggler tribe's island was a haven for travelers on the waters of the archipelago. No one wanted to be in their bad graces.

"So what do we do then?" Fishlegs asked.

Hicca thought about this for a moment before turning to Heath. "Heath, you've been shadowing these guys for a while right?" she asked. When he nodded in confirmation she pressed on. "Any ideas on any vices they have?"

Heath brought his finger to tap his chin in thought. "They seem to be easily distracted by women I suppose," he replied with a shrug.

Hicca smiled to herself. She hoped he would say that. "Excellent. Ok

guys, here's the plan," Hicca began as she looked to the entire group. "Ruff and I will create a distraction. I'll slip some sedatives into their drinks and then you guys steal that map and schedule," he explained. "Heath, how good of a pickpocket are you?" she asked.

Heath smiled and his eyes sparkled with a hint of mischief. "One of the best milady," he said with a smirk.

"Good. Then I'm counting on you to get that map and schedule. Any questions?" Hicca asked looking to the group.

"I got one," Ash said speaking up. When they all looked to him he pressed on, "How do we know we can trust you Heath?" he asked with narrowed eyes.

Heath looked offended by his question. "Oh gods Ash. Are you still sore about what happened the last time we saw each other. I thought we buried the hatchet on that," he said with a groan.

"We could've died Heath. Now you expect us to just trust you," Ash replied.

"What exactly happened anyway?" Hicca asked curiously.

"Heath stole the book of dragons for Alvin and the Outcasts," Snotlout informed her.

"Exactly. He was going to give that lunatic the secret to training dragons. You know what a man like Alvin would do with that kind of info?" he said leaving the question hanging in the air.

"They had my family hostage Ash," Heath reminded him. "What was I supposed to do? Besides, I helped you get it back," he pointed out. "Now I use my powers of deception for good. I help people find loved ones and I keep my eyes on the moreâ€¦unfriendly tribes on these waters," he said with pride.

"And I'm sure you do this out of the kindness of your heart?" Ash asked dryly.

"No Ash, I ask for a bit of compensation. I put myself into life and death situations and a man has to eat after all. But I don't ask for too much," he shot back.

"I say we trust him," Hicca piped in, interrupting the back and forth between the boys. At Ash's incredulous look she explained her reasoning, "He hasn't given us a reason to mistrust him yet. The Loudmouths trusted him and he was exactly where Gnash said he would be. Plus he's made the job easier for us by finding out much needed Intel." She paused to look at Heath and smiled. She liked Heath. He was a lot like a ninja; very covert and subtle. Plus she understood the need for compensation. The clan would ask for things like gold, produce, tools, and building material in exchange for carrying out missions.

"Why thank you milady," Heath said returning her smile. Ash grumbled in acceptance.

"Ok Ruff, come with me," Hicca ordered the female twin. With that

both girls got up and walked off. The boys watched them walk away, curious as to what Hicca had in mind.

"Sooooo," Heath said breaking the silence. When all the boys turned to look at him he asked what was on his mind, "Is Hicca seeing anyone?"

Ash's right eye twitched in anger. _Odin All father. Kingdom of Valhalla, Thor, and all the Valkyries. Give me the strength,_ Ash thought in prayer. As much as the group needed Heath for their mission to be successful. Ash really, really, really wanted to hurl his axe at him for his apparent interest in Hicca.

With that the boys settled down to wait to see what Hicca had in store.

* * *

><p>Twenty minutes later the boys were still seated at the table waiting for Hicca to enact her plan. They didn't say anything as they simply drank their mugs full of mead. They exchanged glances during the awkward silence as they contemplated whether or not to trust Heath. They were only slightly wary of him, he did redeem himself after all when he helped them get the book of dragons back. Ash however, wasn't as forgiving. His distrust of Heath was bolstered by his jealousy of how Hicca seemed to trust and warm up to him so quickly. Not to mention that Heath seemed to easily earn warm smiles from her without even trying.<p>

Ash knew he was being silly. Hicca and Heath had just met and the chances of them becoming something more seemed unlikely. But then again, it's not like Hicca and Ash were together. Even if Ash was courting Hicca, she could easily decide to end that or let Heath court her as well. She could decide that she just liked Heath better. The thought made Ash squeeze his mug until his knuckles were white. Jealousy started to bubble up within him as he glowered into his mug. What if she did like Heath more? It's not like she was his, and he couldn't stop her from liking him.

As Ash was internally festering in his own jealousy the owner of the establishment directed the serving girls to extinguish some of torches around the room. With them extinguished, the whole room was dimmed and suddenly two large torch bowls were lit on either side of the stage. With their light everyone's attention was turned to the stage where the owner, a large Viking was standing in the center and looking to his patrons.

"Hello boyos!" the large man shouted with a smile. When he had everyone's attention he pressed on, "I'm glad to have you all here in my fine establishment. I like to treat my patrons well. So boys, what do you think of the service here?" At his question many of the patrons raised their mugs and gave him a positive cheer. The owner's smile grew and he bellowed in laughter. "Well I'm glad you are all enjoying yourselves. So sit back and down some mead till your hearts' content. I also have a special treat for you all tonight! For your viewing pleasure we have two performers who hail from the sea of sands," he paused while all the patrons raised curious eyebrows. "So let's all give a hand to the Tifa Sisters, Phatifah and Latifah!" the owner cried while clapping before he stepped aside to reveal two women standing behind him.

Every man's eyes widened as they took in the women behind them. The riders and Heath all stood up in surprise as they looked at the women more closely. The 'sisters' were standing next to each other with their hands on their hips and their eyes closed. One was a blond with long hair that were tied into braids all knotted together and running down her back. She was wearing a blue fitted top full of shimmering gold sequins that exposed her midriff. At her hips was a matching blue belt and a floor length dress. Upon second glance, the riders and Heath could immediately tell that it was Ruffnut. Fishlegs and Snotlout were practically drooling at the sight of her.

To the girl's right was the other one. A few inches shorter, she was wearing a similar outfit, only hers was in red. Her long auburn hair that consisted of a single braid was tied in a circular bun on her head. On her face was a red veil that covered her nose and mouth. Her eyelids were shaded a light purple color. Suddenly both women opened their eyes. The shorter one's green eyes practically popped with the aid of the eyeliner.

All the men in the tavern were staring at both the women's bodies with dropped jaws. But no one's jaw was hanging lower than Ash's as his eyes wandered down Hicca's body. He knew Hicca was in incredible shape but he could have never imagined that the girl he'd known since he was a child could look like that. Her flat toned stomach, those curves and contours, and her chest. He guessed that Hicca, like most Viking women, always kept her chest wrapped to prevent them from getting in the way. She was deceptively bigger than Ash had thought.

"Wow, twenty year old Hicca," Tuffnut muttered aloud. He was ogling Hicca as much as Ash was since the only other person on stage was his sister.

"Son of a bitch!" Ash muttered incredulously. Hicca was so freaking gorgeous!

On stage Hicca and Ruffnut were doing an improvised dance routine. Hicca had learned how to dance while in the ninja clan. Many kunoichi would disguise themselves as performers and Geisha to get close enough to assassinate a target and thus learning how to dance was essential. Mayumi had also forced Hicca into learning other types of dances to help develop her coordination, timing, stamina, and balance. Ruffnut was just taking Hicca's lead and copying her movements as best she could. The men didn't seem to mind as they hollered and hooted at the stage in approval at the scantily clad women's dancing. They watched as Hicca twirled while stepping to her left and ended up directly behind Ruffnut and out of sight. Then Ruffnut raised her arms up while Hicca directed her arms downward from behind her. The crowd clapped as Ruffnut appeared to have four hands. Then the girls started to slowly move their arms up and down while Ruffnut leaned her body left and right. The crowd was mesmerized by the illusion and watched intently.

After a few moments Hicca stepped out from behind Ruffnut and stood next to her once again. Then Hicca started to rock and roll her hips left and right to the beat of the music that the tavern's bards happened to be providing while Ruffnut copied her action. Hicca raised her arms up and over her head to accentuate their movements. The patrons whistled and cat called at them. Ruffnut was having a

blast. Having lost a sense of shame and embarrassment long ago she liked having all these men's eyes on her. Hicca was indifferent to the men's lustful stares as she was focused on the mission. Scanning over the crowd, Hicca saw that they had everyone's full attention. The Scarred Ones were all looking at her with unwavering regard. Hicca decided that now was the time to act. Taking a few steps back Hicca took a breath. Then to everyone's surprise she surged forward to the front of the stage a leap off.

Everyone gasped as Hicca flew through the air and did a mid-air turn and twist before landing on her feet with her arms above her head, striking a pose. The patrons clapped and cheered at her incredible feat of agility. On stage, Ruffnut continued her dancing to divide the attention as much as she could. Hicca began to make her way through the throng of tables and men and toward the table where the three Scarred Ones were seated. While sauntering and dancing her way toward the Scarred Ones, men would jeer, lunge, and attempt to pull Hicca onto their laps. Yet every time, Hicca would spin, duck, and dance just out of their reach. Taking a running start, she flipped and somersaulted onto the table of the Scarred Ones.

The Scarred Ones were initially surprised by Hicca's bold acrobatic move. But they didn't think much of it as she began to wiggle and rock her hips back and forth. They were drooling as they watched her hypnotic dance. Then Hicca crouched down and leaned over to one of the Scarred Ones. Reaching a hand out, she pulled him closer by the beard, motioning like she was going to kiss him. While the man was more focused on his kiss, Hicca placed her other hand over his mug and slipped a powdered sedative in. Before their lips met, Hicca released his beard and pushed him back. The man chuckled at her teasing and took a sip from his mug. Hicca turned to the remaining Scarred Ones and performed the same move, slipping the sedative into both of their drinks. The sedatives wouldn't knock them out completely. It would just lower their awareness and make them lethargic. With her task accomplished she swept her eyes across the room until she located Heath and the riders. Locking eyes with Heath, she gave the subtlest nod she could. He seemed to get the message as he nodded back and started backing away from the table.

With her objective done Hicca was about to make her way back to the stage and end their dance routine when she locked eyes with Ash. She smirked at his expression. His eyes were trained on her and his mouth was hanging open. Seeing the way he was looking at her, Hicca decided to have a little fun. Stepping down and off the table she walked over to him. When she reached him she giggled to herself at his wide eyed expression. Reaching out her right arm out, she placed a finger on Ash's chest before trailing it up and down his chest. She could hear his heart racing in his chest and his eyes were full of want and desire. Placing her palm flat against his chest, she gave him a push, forcing him back into his seat. He looked up at her in surprise and she gave him a mischievous look. Reaching out, she grabbed both of his hands in hers and placed them at her hips. Before Ash could look at her inquisitively, she raised her arms above her head and started to roll and rock them left and right.

Ash immediately dropped his gaze to her body, lost in the fluid motion and the sensation of her muscles tensing and relaxing in his hands. Hicca smiled to herself as Ash was lost in the feeling and sight of her body. She had hoped for this. She wanted to drive him crazy. She wanted him to look, want and, think about only her. She

liked feeling this powerful; to know that she had this kind of effect on him. She started to go faster, making Ash's pulse quicken as a result as he was mesmerized by her movement. After a few moments Ash got brave and moved his hands up from her hips to her sides, lightly squeezing and trailing his thumbs over the skin of her midriff. Hicca got goose bumps and her skin tingled at the feeling of his rough yet gentle hands on her exposed flesh. Hicca decided to end it with this. She slapped at his hands, making him pull them back as if he had been burned. He looked up at her, his eyes were full of worry as he thought that maybe he had done something wrong or overstepped his bounds. To reassure him, she bent down slightly and took his face in his hands. Inching her face closer she touched their noses together and rubbed hers against hers in an Eskimo kiss. Ash's face went red as she did the light display of affection and he stared into her eyes. With a smile she pulled back and released his face before making her way back to the stage.

Ash watched her walk away while placing a hand over his heart in an attempt to slow its racing. He couldn't believe she had just done that to him in public. Snotlout and Tuffnut were smirking at him and chuckling at his bewildered expression. Fishlegs was polite enough to not say anything. Ash threw Snot and Tuff a death glare before looking back to Hicca who was now back on stage.

With the music ending the girls struck a final pose and remained motionless. Signaling the end of their routine to the owner he came up on stage to congratulate them and thank them for their performance. Both girls nodded in acceptance as Hicca scanned the room for Heath. She found him back in his seat and when she locked eyes with him he gave her a thumbs up, signaling his success. With a slight nod the girls waved to the patrons and bowed before stepping off the stage and following some serving girls to the back of the tavern so they could change back into their regular attire. Before disappearing out of sight Hicca motioned for the boys to follow them. When they got up and started making their way toward them Hicca turned her head back to follow the serving girl.

She was glad that her planned had worked so well. There were probably other ways to go about getting the map and schedule but they would take time. She wanted the families to be rescued as soon as possible. With the next part of the mission complete Hicca began to plan the next course of action.

* * *

><p>In a back room of the tavern, the riders and Heath were discussing their mission. Hicca was currently informing the boys, who were very curious, as to how she had gotten them to pass as performers. Hicca explained that she had told the tavern owner that it had been her and her 'sister's' dream to perform on stage. When he was hesitant she said they would do it for free and he immediately agreed to their idea. He had even been generous enough to provide them with outfits he had gotten from trades with past patrons.<p>

"I like the way you think Hicca," Heath said impressed.

"Why thank you Heath. I've had to do stuff like this before and it's usually worked out. So you did get the map and schedule right?" she asked just to be certain.

"Absolutely milady," Heath said giving her an affirmative nod and patting the bulge in his cloak.

"Good. Why don't you guys wait for Ruff and I outside the tavern and have Fishlegs look it over," she suggested to Snotlout, Heath, Tuffnut, and Fishlegs. "Ash, guard the door while we change please," she told Ash who nodded in response.

At her orders the boys, save Ash, filed out of the room. With the boys gone, Hicca turned to look at Ash who for some reason hadn't left the room to stand outside the door. "Ash?" Hicca said questionably to the boy. He nodded again in response but didn't move. That's when Hicca noticed that Ash was staring down at her body. Blatantly. He wasn't even attempting to be sneaky about it.

"Ash," Hicca said a little louder to get his attention. Once again he only nodded dumbly and continued his staring. Raising her hand up to his face, she snapped her fingers under his nose. That seemed to snap him out of his stupor as he flinched and looked into her eyes.

"Sorry what?" He said clueless.

"Were you even paying attention Ash?" Hicca asked in irritation. Though truth be told she wasn't all that annoyed with him. She was flattered that her appearance could affect him so. With a playful smile she stepped closer and pressed herself against him. "Do you like the way I look in this outfit Ash?" she asked him.

Ash flushed red and scoffed at her question. "No," he denied as hard as he could. Total lie. He wanted Hicca to keep that outfit.

"Sure you don't Ash," Hicca said with a smirk. "Now go stand outside and watch the door," she commanded. He nodded and stepped outside, giving the girl a chance to change. Leaving the door open just a crack, Ash could hear the sound of the girls undressing. The urge to take a peek was incredible. Ash usually had much better self-control than this. In the past he would never have even thought about sneaking a peek. But Hicca was in there. Shaking his head he stared straight ahead with all the discipline he could muster. He didn't want to ruin his chances with Hicca just because he wanted to see her without her clothes on.

Like really, really, really, really, wanted to see.

As the girls were changing Ruffnut spoke up, "That was fun. We should totally do that again," she said with enthusiasm.

"No thank you," Hicca said in denial. "I hate having all those people staring at me," she said with a shudder.

"Except for Ash of course," Ruffnut said with a knowing smirk.

Hicca smiled to herself. "Except for Ash," she said with a nod.

Ruffnut chuckled before she continued to undress. She couldn't believe how cool and awesome Hicca had become. Old Hicca would have never done that in a million years. And old Ruffnut wouldn't have joined her either. She couldn't help but feel that Hicca and she were

becoming closer.

Almost like they were becoming friends.

After changing back into their normal attire the group started to make their way back to their dragons. Heath was joining the group, much to Ash's annoyance. Heath was excited to see a Night Fury and asked Hicca a multitude of questions about Toothless. Hicca responded to his question in delight, she could talk about Toothless all day. When they finally reached the cave and entered, Heath saw Toothless and his jaw dropped.

"Wow! So that's a Night Fury," Heath whispered in amazement. He couldn't believe how beautiful and magnificent Toothless was. He had seen and encountered many dragons on his travels, but Toothless was in the top tier of what he thought to be an impressive species.

"Sure is," Hicca said with a chuckle. Toothless was her pride and joy. She reached out a hand to scratch her companion who had come up to her in greeting. The other dragons copied his actions, relieved that their riders were ok. "Ok guys, saddle up your dragon and exit the cave so I can change," Hicca ordered the group. They all nodded in confirmation before they grabbed their gear and saddled up their dragons. Then they led them outside the cave and left Hicca and Toothless alone so she could change back into her ninja outfit.

After a few minutes Hicca walked out in her all black outfit with Toothless right behind her. Both set and prepared to go.

Heath whistled, impressed by Hicca's looks in her ninja gear. "I must say milady, I thought you looked amazing before," Heath began with a smile. "But damn, you look stunning in that outfit."

Hicca blushed slightly and thanked him for the compliment. Ash glared at Heath. He brushed his hand over the handle of his axe to try and calm himself.

"And that purple eye shadow really brings out your eyes. They remind me of emeralds," he said with a wink. That earned him another blush, smile, and thank you from Hicca. Ash was cursing himself for not telling her that. He had been thinking the same thing but hadn't said anything. Now Heath had said it and stolen a smile from Hicca.

"Well Heath it's been fun and all but I guess your part is over," Ash quickly said. He wanted Heath gone, like now. With him around he was losing opportunities to get closer to Hicca.

"Not so fast Ash," Heath piped in. "I was paid to find those families. My job isn't over till I do. So I'm coming with you," Heath said holding Ash's gaze.

As Ash was about to protest Hicca spoke up, "That's fine Heath. But you're gonna have to ride with one of us," Hicca said.

"Not a problem. But I was hoping we could make a stop first," Heath asked looking to Hicca. When she cocked her head to the side in question, he explained. "I have a partner I need to go and retrieve first. He's at a beach not too far from here," he informed the

group.

Hicca mulled it over for a moment before nodding in acceptance. Then she mounted Toothless and politely offered Heath a ride. Heath excitedly accepted and climbed on the back of Toothless with a smile. Ash mounted Stormfly and gripped the handle of her saddle tightly as he saw her put his arms around her waist. Oh how he wanted to throw something at him. With everyone mounted on their dragon they took off and followed Heath's direction to a secluded beach a few miles from their cave. From the sky the group noticed a small boat pulled ashore. Heath pointed it out and said it was his. The group landed near it and Heath dismounted and started walking toward it.

"Well we can carry it Heath, but it gonna slow us down slightly," Hicca said to him.

Heath turned to her and smiled. "That's ok. My partner has got this," he said. Then he walked toward the edge of the water. The others watched him curiously. Putting a finger to his lips, Heath let out a loud and sharp whistle. A few moments of silence after the whistle a low croon was heard from the water. Then in the distance, the group could make out something rising out of the water. Then it drew closer and they all recognized it a familiar dragon.

"Is that aâ€", " Fishlegs began.

"Yes Fishlegs it is," Heath said as he smiled out at the approaching beast. "Everyone, I want to introduce you to my dragon. Broiler," Heath said extending a palm toward the large Tidal class dragon.

Broiler, a Scauldron, crooned in greeting at his rider before lowering his head and placing his snout against his palm. Then he looked up at the riders and growled lightly at the unfamiliar strangers. "Easy there partner, these guys are friends," Heath said to soothe him. At his words Broiler calmed down and ceased his growling. With that Heath turned around and smiled proudly at the riders.

"Impressive," Hicca said honestly.

"Wow!" Snotlout and the twins said in unison.

Fishlegs shouted enthusiastically and started to bombard Heath with questions about how he tamed it and where he found him and what he ate and questions of that nature.

Heath raised up a hand to silence Fishlegs, "Whoa, easy there Legs. I'll tell you I'll about it later so you can add it to the book of dragons," he promised. Then he looked to Ash, guessing what he was thinking. "And no Ash. I'm not spreading the secrets about how to train dragons around. I just needed one to get around. Traveling by dragon is so much easier than just using a boat," he explained.

Ash settled down slightly at having heard that. He was immediately wary that Heath was spreading the knowledge to other tribes. Still, he wasn't enthusiastic about Heath having a dragon of his own. With Broiler, Heath and Ash were on equal footing. He thought that at least he had dragon knowledge and expertise that he shared with Hicca, but now Heath was obviously a good a trainer as himself.

"Now that I got my partner, I say we get going," Heath firmly suggested. Then he looked to Broiler and pointed down. The dragon crouched down and lowered his wing to the ground. Stepping on it, Heath was raised up and jumped into the saddle at the base of Broiler's neck. When he was firmly in place Heath got his dragon's attention before pointing to his boat and then pointing up to the sky. The others watched as Broiler nodded and opened his wings before flapping them hard and leaping into the air. With a few flaps he was airborne and hovering above them. Then the dragon flew above Heath's boat and grabbed the mast in his claws before lifting it off the ground.

The others were impressed by Heath's ingenuity and joined him in the sky. With all of the set to go, Hicca asked Fishlegs where they were heading. He said to an island to the west and they all directed their dragon in that direction. Hicca took the lead and the other followed behind her. Fishlegs called out that it would take about a day to reach the island the families were being kept. The reason being Meatlug. Hicca nodded in understanding before saying that they would stop on an island and rest before they rescued the families.

The others nodded in confirmation and started to psych themselves up. Their mission was almost complete. They were one step close to freeing the families.

* * *

><p>After flying all through the night and into the early morning, the group settled down on an island about two hours away from their destination. Hicca decided that night would be the best time to attack. So with the plan set, the group got in a few hours of much needed rest. After a few hours of sleep the group woke up and started eating the breakfast so generously provided by Heath. Traveling around with a boat meant he could carry much more food than the rider's travel rations. So he made them all some rabbit stew with servings of bread and fruit. The riders all accepted gratefully.<p>

As they all settled down to eat, Heath began to retell the tale about how he trained Broiler. Apparently Broiler was a dragon that had made the waters around his home island its territory. Hoping to help his village, Heath set out to train him. He recounted how he nearly drowned several times when he attempted to bond with Broiler and the aggressive dragon had destroyed his boat in all his attempts. He explained that one day, seeing no other options, he took a gamble and covered himself in fish oil. The smell apparently had a calming effect on the dragon, allowing him to establish a bond with it. Then he would come back every day after that, covered in fish oil and bringing him fish and a special flower that Scauldrons loved to eat. Within the course of a few weeks Broiler and Heath became closer and the dragon even allowed Heath to ride him. With a faster means of reliable travel, Heath set out to explore the archipelago. While on his travels he took odd jobs that eventually led to him becoming The Raven. A Viking who took jobs for the greater good and kept his eyes and ears open for trouble on the waters.

"Wow. Cool story," Hicca said impressed.

"Why thank you milady," Heath said throwing her a sly grin.

"Yeah man. He's awesome," Snotlout said gesturing to Broiler.

"Thanks Snot. Yeah, he's pretty great," Heath said in agreement. He loved his partner very much. He couldn't recall how many times he had saved his ass during one of his jobs.

"So what kinds of jobs do you do Heath?" Ruffnut asked.

"Well, typical sell sword stuff I suppose. I look for lost relatives, I've done some body guarding, retrieved stolen property, transported shipments of medication and other supplies between tribes," Heath said listing off all the jobs he had done.

"Nice," Hicca said. "And you made the saddle yourself?" she asked.

"Yes ma'am. I was taught a little smithing as a kid so I put it to good use," he said with a proud smile. "I don't know if I could make anything near as complicated and impressive as that tailfin though," he said motioning with his head to Toothless. "How does it work?" He asked truly curious.

Hicca smiled and scooted closer to him as she began to explain the mechanisms and designs behind the tailfin. Heath listened intently and nodded in understanding as she jumped into her process of making it.

As they spoke, the others continued their own conversations. All save Ash, who was scowling in the direction of Heath and Hicca as he watched them talk. His nostrils were flaring and he was grinding his teeth together in frustration. Getting up, he walked over to Stormfly and retrieved his battle-axe before heading toward the woods of the island. Looking back, he was disappointed to see that Hicca hadn't even noticed him get up and leave as she was still speaking animatedly with Heath.

Before he did or said something stupid he made his way into the woods to vent some of his emotions. He didn't want to ruin his chances with Hicca with his jealousy. She wasn't his after all.

"She's not yours. She's not yours. She's not yours," he told himself bitterly. With a sigh he walked deeper into the woods. Unable to escape the emotions that were threatening to drown him.

* * *

><p>"YAAAAAHHHHH!" Ash yelled as he hurled his axe at a tree. He had been at this for hours nonstop. Yet no matter how much he tried he couldn't rid himself of these poisonous thoughts that seemed to be plaguing him.<p>

They were all about Hicca and Heath. He hated how well they seemed to get along. He hated how easily Heath could get a smile out of Hicca. He hated how easy it was for Heath to compliment her or say how he felt about her. Then there was the fact that Heath was now a dragon rider, yet another way for the two of them to connect. Even worse, Heath was talented in smithing, they were compatible in yet another way.

Ash walked over to his axe and ripped it from the tree. Then he vigorously started to swing at the tree, scattering bark everywhere as he hacked into its surface. What if she liked Heath better? What if she decided to let Heath court her as well? What if she just chose to be with Heath and decided that Ash wasn't worth her time? Those thoughts plagued Ash's mind. He didn't know what he would do if Hicca were to choose to be with Heath. Honestly, he thought that it would kill him. He imagined the pain being akin to getting shot in the heart with a crossbow while drowning and somehow being burned alive with dragon fire. Ash hated this feeling. He hated how weak and helpless he felt. Swing at the tree from the right, the axe suddenly became embedded in the tree's side. Giving it a hard tug, Ash growled in frustration when it didn't come free. The blade had become dull from overuse. With gritted teeth, he attempted to pull it free once more and it still didn't come loose.

Giving up he shouted a string of curses before punching the tree. He still needed to vent his anger. Throwing punch after punch against the tree he was aware of the pain in his hands. But he just didn't care. The pain helped. It took his mind off Hicca and Heath. It felt good. When he got tired and paused to take a breath the thoughts came back with a vengeance. He hated his own cowardliness. But most of all he hated how much Hicca had the right to not choose him.

"Ash?" came her voice.

Standing upright, he glanced over his shoulder and back at her. She was looking at him with what looked like concern. "Oh. Hey Hicca, what's up?" he tried to say casually.

"I noticed you walk into the woods. You've been gone for a while so I came to check up on you," she explained. Looking around, she noticed all the trees marked with slashed and holes from where Ash had flung his axe. "Are you ok? Is something bothering you?" she asked looking up at him. She had noticed him leave as soon as he gotten up but didn't want to be rude to Heath and abruptly end their conversation. When she had finished explaining her tailfin and saddle designs she excused herself and went to go search for Ash. It had taken a while but she had found him.<p>

"I'm fine," Ash lied. He turned back and started directly at the tree in front of him.

Hicca frowned. "You're lying Ash." She could hear his heartbeat. "Tell me what's wrong," she demanded.

"Nothing," Ash said through grit teeth. He hated how Hicca could tell when he was lying. He reached out with both hand and gripped the tree in front of him. His temper was on the rise.

"Ash. We agreed that you had to be genuine and honest with me if you wanted this to work," she reminded him.

"Why don't you just go find Heath then? I'm sure he'll be as genuine and as honest as you want him to be," Ash replied lamely.

"What does Heath have to do with this?" Hicca asked in confusion. She didn't understand why Heath would upset him so much. Sure they had a

bad introduction in the past, but still he was helping them. And Heath was friendly, especially to her. Ohhhh. Hicca thought she might have figured out what was bothering Ash. Cocking her head to the side and furrowing her brows in confusion she asked her next question. "Ash, are you jealous of Heath?" she asked.

"No," Ash muttered quietly.

Hicca released a sigh in annoyance. "You're lying Ash," she said blankly.

"YES HICCA! I'M JEALOUS OF HEATH OK!?" Ash replied hotly.

Hicca's brows furrowed more in confusion. "Why?"

"BECAUSE," Ash snapped before taking a breath to calm himself. When he had he tried again but softer and less harsh, "Because you two seem to get along so well. What's to stop you from like him more than me?" Ash muttered miserably. "I came here because I don't want to screw up again. But every time I see him make you smile, I want to throw my axe at him. But I'm afraid that will piss you off and make you hate me again. I just don't know what to do," Ash said placing his forehead against the tree.

Hicca's eyes widened as she heard Ash admit his feelings. She couldn't believe he was feeling this way. "What makes you think I'd suddenly choose Heath over you?" she asked.

"Because Heath isn't afraid to tell you how he feels. He's a dragon rider, he's a smith, you have more in common with him than me," Ash answered. Swallowing a lump in his throat he pressed his argument, "And you have every right to pick him. It's not like you're mine. I want your heart Hicca. But I know I haven't claimed it yet. You can decide you want someone else at any moment and leave me behind," he said sadly.

Hicca's heart softened as she saw how much pain Ash was in. He was jealous of Heath. Afraid that Heath was going to steal her heart from him. Honestly, Hicca felt no romantic attraction to Heath. Admittedly she did find him attractive and was flattered by his compliments, but she was only being polite to him in their interactions. Ash's jealousy only proved how much she meant to him. What's more, he wasn't being possessive of her. He was acknowledging that she had the freedom to choose someone else, no matter how much it was hurting him.

She had to help him. His jealousy was suffocating him. She had to reassure him that she felt the same way for him that he did for her. That he was the only person who held her affections.

"Ash, will you look at me please," she pleaded softly. Slowly, Ash turned around to face her. Hicca's heart clenched as she saw the turmoil in his eyes. Giving him a soft smile she reached up her right hand and placed it against his cheek. She felt him relax at her touch and then he looked into her eyes. "Ash, you don't have to worry about Heath. You're the only man in the running for my heart," she said earnestly. She held his gaze so he could see the truth in her eyes. Ash searched her face for a few moments as he tried to ascertain whether or not she was being honest. Then he let out a breath and slumped back against the tree and slid down it until he was sitting

with his back against it. He was suddenly exhausted physically from his hours of exertion and the emotional weight that had been weighing him down all this time.

Hicca smiled down at him. Apparently her words had done their job and relieved him of some of his stress. Deciding to seal the deal she lowered herself down onto him until she was sitting in his lap. She looked into his eyes as she wrapped her arms around his neck and she smiled at him. Then leaning forward she kissed him on his neck and started trailing kisses up his neck, along his jaw line, and up the side of his face. She smiled as she felt him relax even more. Coming close to his ear she bit it lightly, earning a small throaty moan from him.

"I'm sorry I made you jealous. It wasn't my intention," she said honestly. Then she continued to kiss him on the cheek. She wanted to make sure he was completely self-assured that he had no competition. "You don't have to worry about Heath. I'm more into blondes," she said jokingly to lighten his mood. It seemed to work as he chuckled lightly. Pursing her lips in thought, she wondered what else she could do to help reassure him. Her eyes lit up as she was struck with an idea. Pulling back slightly, she began to unwrap the black scarf around her neck.

Ash watched her curiously and wondered what she was doing. He was feeling infinitely better now that she had told him he didn't have to worry about Heath.

After Hicca removed her scarf she pulled down her undershirt that ran up her neck and also served as her mask. Pulling it down she exposed her neck and then swept her hair to one side. Presenting her neck to Ash she said, "Here, leave your mark on me."

Ash lifted an eyebrow in question. He had no idea what she was talking about.

"Go on. I give you permission," she insisted. Ash remained still, completely clueless. With a sigh of annoyance Hicca grabbed the back of his head and pulled him forward until his lips met her neck. Ash got the idea as he started to kiss her neck. Placing his hands at the small of her back he held her close as he began to nuzzle and kiss her skin. Hicca gasped lightly at the sensation of his lips against her flesh. It felt nice. And knowing that it was Ash doing it was all the more pleasing. She shut her eyes as Ash nipped at her skin lightly, making her shudder. This earned a moan and another gasp in pleasure as Hicca started to lose herself in the intimacy of them being together.

Ash was enjoying this as well. Finally getting what Hicca had meant he started to suck on her neck, intent on leaving his 'mark' on her. It wasn't a true claim on her but it would make him feel loads better. As he sucked on her neck he paused to look up into her face. He saw that her eyes were closed in pleasure and she was biting down on her lip lightly to try and silence herself. At his abrupt stop in the assault on her neck she opened her eyes and looked at him.

"Why'd you stop?" she asked with furrowed brows.

Ash smiled and returned to his task. Hicca released another gasp

before moaning as he continued to suck on her neck. She squeezed her eyes shut against the pleasure and she raised her head up to expose as much of her neck to him as she could.

"We should do this more often," she muttered between pants as her breathing started to become ragged.

Ash nodded against her neck, still focused on what he was doing. In those moments Ash could feel that slowly, he had begun to win Hicca's heart. It wasn't his completely, not yet. There was still so much to do to prove that he was truly worthy of her. He wasn't truly worthy of it until he could tell her how he really felt about her.

But he would get there. One day, maybe sooner than later, her heart would be his. That, he swore to himself.

* * *

><p>New Chapter. feel free to review and comment

17. Chapter 17

Freeing the Families

After letting Ash ravish her neck for as long as he wanted, Hicca suggested they head back to camp. Ash agreed and let go of his gentle hold on her. Hicca took back her scarf and stood up before wrapping it back around her neck. She wanted to be sure she hid the five dark blotches on her neck Ash had left from his relentless assault. Not that she minded them, she just didn't want the others staring at them and making jabs at her expense. Once her scarf was securely around her neck and her marks were covered she looked to Ash who had stood up and finally pulled his axe from the tree. He smiled at her and nodded to signal he was ready to head back. Hicca nodded back and started leading the way back to camp, walking just a few steps ahead of him.

Ash trailed behind her with a smile on his face. No longer weighed down by his dark emotions, he felt a lot better. Hicca had reassured him that he was on the right track to winning her heart and Heath wasn't going to end up as a rival for it. Not to mention that she had let him hold her and leave evidence of his affections on her body. They weren't much, but to Ash it felt like added insurance. With his confidence soaring to the clouds he stared at the amazing girl he loved and counted his blessings. Then his eyes drifted lower before settling on her rear and watching that as he followed behind her and back to camp.

After about twenty minutes of walking they could hear the voices and sounds of their companions. Hicca stopped and turned around to face Ash, whose head immediately shot up and he smiled sheepishly at her. "Were you checking me out?" Hicca asked with narrowed eyebrows.

"Yes," Ash said with a goofy grin. He was feeling too giddy to deny it. He thought Hicca was hot.

Hicca kept her expression before her mouth formed into a grin of her

own. If anyone else had admitted that to her with a goofy smile she would have broken his nose. But she didn't mind Ash looking at her. She preferred that he did. "Well thank you Ash," she said to him with a blush. As she turned to walk out of the tree line and into camp, Ash piped up.

"Hicca," Ash said to get her attention. When she turned to look at him she met his eyes and nodded with her head for him to go on. Ash rubbed the back of his head with his free hand and shifted his gaze to the right. He was flushing red as he took a breath to ask his question. "Are we ever going to do that again?" Ash stuttered out nervously.

Hicca smirked at him. He was obviously referring to letting him leave his marks on her. "You mean me letting you attack my neck?" she asked playfully. His blushed turned a deeper shade of crimson before he nodded slowly. "Probably," Hicca simply said with shrug. Ash turned to her and beamed in delight. Hicca giggled at his happy expression.

"Hicca. I think you're amazing," Ash quickly blurted out before he lost the nerve.

Hicca was surprised by the sudden compliment but smiled at Ash. It was so sweet and genuine. He was getting better at admitting how he felt about her. Showing his softer, more vulnerable side was becoming easier for him. As a reward for his efforts she took a step toward him and placed her hands on his shoulders. Then rising up on her tip toes, she kissed him firmly on his cheek. Pulling back she said, "We'll definitely do that again," she told him. Ash's smile grew as he looked at her with eyes full of affection.

With that, Hicca turned around and exited the tree line and back into camp with Ash right behind her. The others noticed them and greeted them. They greeted them back and asked what was going on. Apparently they had been exchanging stories, with Heath currently going on about how he once had to escort the daughter of a chief to the north to her betrothed on another island. He explained how she had been an unruly spoiled brat and he had to threaten to let Broiler eat her to get her under control. Everyone chuckled in laughter as Hicca took a seat across the campfire from Heath and not next to him like before. She did this to allow Ash to sit next to her and show him she had no interest in Heath. No one seemed to think anything of her new position as they continued to listen to his story. As Ash came to sit next to her she noticed that he was smiling to himself and enjoying the story. She was glad he was more at ease now and scooted a bit closer to him.

With that, Heath finished his story and the others suggested Hicca tell her one her own. Hicca smiled and told her about the time she had to steal back a family sword from a gambler. The others listened intently to her tale and they all shared stories of their own as the day went by. When the sun began to set, Heath prepared them one last meal before they all packed up and saddled their dragons. Mounting, they continued west to the island where the families were being held. It was time to save them.

* * *

><p>The group was currently peeking out of the forest line at the two

Vikings ahead guarding and iron door built into the side of the island's lone mountain. The group had reached the island at nightfall and circled while they scouted it out. Hicca had done most of the surveying, with Toothless not being able to be seen with his dark coloration. Then she directed the group to land on a cliff and leave their dragons while they all descended and made their way down the cliff, into the forest, and to the entrance to the mountain where she bet the families were being held.<p>

"Should we just rush them?" Snotlout asked quietly.

"No," Hicca answered while thinking up a plan.

"We could probably take them out with a shuriken," Ruffnut suggested.

"Probably. But I'm more concerned with how we're going to get these people off the island," she said looking to her friends. "There's probably a lot of people in there. Our dragons won't be able to take them all at once," she said thoughtfully.

"What if we steal some of their ships?" Fishlegs offered.

"Good idea," Hicca said with a nod. "But they're probably guarding them. We'll need to take the guards out," she said tapping her chin in thought.

"I can handle that," Snotlout cut in.

"No. Dragon fire will damage the ships. We need them in good shape if we're gonna sail out of here," Hicca countered.

"We have one dragon that doesn't use fire," Heath said speaking up. "Broiler is a Scauldron. He can't burn the ships down. I'll take care of the guards on the ships," he said with confidence. His eyes were full of determination. He wanted to save the families as much as the riders did. He knew what it was like to have your family taken and used against you.

"Ok Heath, we'll leave that to you. But, be careful," she said warily.

"I'll go with him," Ruffnut piped in. Hicca looked at her inquisitively and she explained herself. "I'm getting pretty good with my shuriken. I can probably take a few out from a distance stealthily," she reasoned.

Hicca mulled it over before nodding in acceptance. As Heath and Ruffnut started to get up and head back to the cliffs to retrieve Broiler Hicca grabbed Ruffnut's hand. "Take this Ruff," she said while unstrapping her blowgun and handing it to her. Then she reached into her pouch and pulled out some darts. "Use these. But be careful. They're covered in poison," she warned the female twin. Ruffnut accepted the weapons and nodded in understanding. Then Heath and her took off through the woods.

With them gone, Hicca, Tuffnut, Ash, Snotlout, and Fishlegs looked at the two Viking guarding the door and contemplated how to get passed them. Coming up with a plan, Ash turned to the group to relay it to them.

"Ok guys. Here's what I think we should do. Hicca-," he immediately stopped as he noticed Hicca wasn't there. "Where the Hel did Hicca go?" he whispered to his friends in shock. They all immediately started scanning the area when cries of pain caught their attention.

Looking back to the door, they saw that both Viking were unconscious and on the floor. One sprawled on his back while another was flat on his stomach. The door was wide open and they all guessed what had happened. After a moment of hesitation they all stepped out of the tree line and ran inside the building. With Ash in the lead they entered as quietly as they could. They found that the inside was pretty well lit with torches lining the walls. This also meant they had to be cautious as people were probably inside.

Taking a few steps inside the group came upon a fork in the tunnels. With Ash in the lead, he peeked around the corners and looked left and right to see if anyone was there. Motioning with his finger he led the group down the right tunnel. Watching their footing they made their way as silently as they could. While they made their way through they had to step over the unconscious or dead bodies of the prison's guards. Obviously left behind by their ninja leader.

Coming to three tunnels one in the center, left, and to the right, the group deliberated on which way they should go. Suddenly a shout was heard to the left and they all turned to see a large Viking charging at them with a war cry and a spear aimed at them. The group crouched low and prepared to engage the enemy when suddenly a black blur dropped down onto his shoulders. The man stopped in surprise and before he could react Hicca grabbed his head with both her hand before jerking it violently to the right, breaking his neck in an instant. As the man fell forward she extended her legs and landed on her feet when he hit the floor. Then she walked over to her shocked comrades and up to Ash.

"I already checked down this way and the right path," she told him. "We should take the center tunnel," she said while pointing to it. Ash nodded in confirmation. As they were about to make their way down another guard came at them with a war cry.

With battle-axe at the ready he was completely focused on Hicca as he came down the center path and was prepared to cleave her in two. As Hicca reached her hand up to grab her Ninjato and charge him, Ash stepped in front of her and then took a step forward before punching the man in the face, hard. The man dropped like a rock to the floor and went unconscious.

He turned to look back at Hicca and shrugged. He knew she hadn't needed his help but he liked protecting her. Hicca smiled up at him in appreciation. Pulling down her mask she mimed a kiss at him, a promise of one later as a reward. He blushed and smiled while she pulled her mask back up and started leading them down the tunnel. After a few minutes of walking down the straight and long tunnel the group came to a large circular chamber. Pausing at the entrance, they peered inside and saw that the side of the room were lined with circular niches covered in crisscrossing metal bars. Prison cells.

Looking around some more they could make out about twenty Scarred

Ones in the room. The odds were against them. With so many they could be surrounded and killed. With a whisper she ordered her friends to go back to the split in the tunnel and be ready. Then she walked into the room, making sure to make enough noise where she would be noticed. Reaching the center of the room, the guards took notice of her and charged her. Immediately Hicca drew her shuriken and kunai before hurling it at her attackers. With precise aim and poison covering the projectiles she was able to drop ten of them. With more still rushing her, some armed with crossbows, she turned tail and ran back down the tunnel in which she had entered. In the hallway the Viking had to move single file as the tunnels were too narrow and they were too broad to enter all at once. They followed Hicca as she ran down the tunnel and waited for them on the opposite side of the left and right tunnel from before. She had led them into a trap. To the right, Snotlout and Ash were waiting with their weapons at the ready to get the jump on the Scarred Ones. To the left, Fishlegs and Tuffnut were doing the same.

As Hicca waited for the men to come, she drew her Ninjato and got ready. The first one rushed passed her friends and at her they prepared to attack. When the second Viking was about to rush passed them Ash swung his axe out and slashed him across the throat. Snotlout struck out with his sword, slashing the third one across his stomach and side, inflicting a deep fatal wound. Fishlegs and Tuffnut did the same with Tuff stabbing with his spear and puncturing one of them in the ribs. Fishlegs aimed his hammer at another one's face and smacked hi across the jaw, knocking him out. As the remaining Vikings realized they had been ambushed, they divided their attention into attacking the riders. The riders being smaller than typical Vikings, save for Fishlegs, had an easier time fighting in the narrow tunnels than their opponents. As the first Vikings brought his sword down on Hicca with the intent to cleave her in two, she side stepped the attack and slashed him across the throat before he could counter. Stepping around him as he bled out she prepared to engage the five remaining Vikings, only to find that her friends had dispatched them.

Walking up to them, she was relieved to see that they were uninjured. They gave her a smile in success before she led them back into the large circular room where the families were being held. As they made their way over to one of the cells, they could make out and hear people inside. When they reached the door to a cell they looked inside and saw women and small children looking at them in fear. At tap on Hicca shoulder caused her to glance behind her and she saw Ash holding up an iron key attached to a ring. Ash had pulled it off on of the Scarred Ones they had fought just before. Taking it, she unlocked the cell and stepped inside. The women and children all scooted as far away from her as they could. The women held their children tightly and positioned themselves in front of them. Hicca took in their state. They were dirty, pale, and some looked a little underfed. But overall they seemed unharmed.

"What do you want Scarred One?" A woman said with a snarl. Hicca turned to look at her and saw she was standing in front of her children protectively. "We've been cooperating like we promised. You swore that no harm would come to us," she said with a glare.

Hicca held her gaze before pulling down her mask. "We are not with the Scarred Ones. We are dragon riders from Berk. We've come to free you and take you back to your families," she told the woman

calmly.

All around the cell, the women and children gasped and their eye widened in disbelief. They couldn't believe it. After all this time someone had come to their rescue. They thought that it could simply be a cruel trick. But then again, the Scarred Ones didn't have any young women among their ranks. And what the girl was wearing didn't seem to be normal Viking attire. As they deliberated whether or not the girl was telling the truth, they watched as she directed her comrades to start unlocking and freeing the other prisoners. The men nodded before running out and opening other cells.

It was true. This woman and her friends had come to rescue them. They would see their husbands, fathers, and brothers again. Some of the women shed tears of joy and thanked the gods.

"Who are you lass?" the woman from before asked Hicca.

"My name is Hicca Horrendous Haddock. Daughter of Stoick the Vast," she answered firmly. Then she extended her hand out for the woman to take. The woman hesitated for a moment before coming forward and taking her hand. Looking into the woman's eyes, she saw relief and gratitude. From behind her, her children stepped forward and smiled up at her in gratitude.

"Thank you pretty lady," the little girl said.

Hicca smiled back and nodded before scooping the little girl up in her arms. Smiling at her, she gave her a kiss on the cheek before leading the prisoners out of the cell. Going back the way they had come the riders led the prisoners out of their prison and into the cool night. The women and children looked up at the starry sky they hadn't seen for months. Some of them even started to cry tears of joys just at the sight of it.

Hicca looked at all the women and children and smiled. Their nightmare was finally over. She had used what she had been taught to help these people. No matter what anyone might say about her style and her 'ninja way', no one could argue that she could put it to good use. She could kill and take lives, but she could also save them.

With that, Hicca and the riders got the prisoners to the ships that Heath and Ruffnut had successfully procured. After retrieving their dragons they set sail towards Berk. There the families would be safe until their husbands came to retrieve them.

* * *

><p>On Berk, Stoick was going about his chiefly duties as a good chief should. But his mind was only half focused on his tasks. No matter how much he tried, he couldn't stop worrying about the riders. And Hicca too. He knew that Hicca said she could handle herself. She had told him that she had done missions like this before and had been trained for this sort of thing. But he couldn't help but worry. The riders had been gone for a little over a week. He prayed to the gods that they were ok.<p>

"Chief!" Came a shout from one of the villagers. Shaking himself from his thoughts he looked to see a villager running toward him from the

direction of the docks.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Ships approaching, at least ten of them. Definitely Scarred Ones ships," the man said quickly.

Stoick processed this information before issuing his orders. "Mobilize the riders. Tell everyone to start getting ready. All noncombatants should be moved to safety," he ordered firmly.

The villager nodded and was about to turn away to start spreading the word when a shout from the sky cut stopped him.

"STOICK!" came a familiar voice. Looking up, Stoick saw Fishlegs descending on his Gronckle.

"Fishlegs? Where are the others?" Stoick called out in surprise

"They're escorting the ships approaching. They're crammed full of the rescued families. There's almost two hundred of them and the boats are pretty cramped. Hicca sent me ahead to give you the heads up," Fishlegs explained.

Stoick nodded before issuing new orders for his people to head down to the docks to help get the people off the ships.

About ten minutes later the ships pulled into the port. The Hooligans immediately rushed down to the ships and started helping the women and children off the ships. They gave them warm smiles and assured them that they were safe. The families smiled and nodded in gratitude at being given such hospitality. Immediately they were escorted to the great hall so they could be fed.

As Stoick watched his people help their visitors, he also scanned the skies for his daughter. After a few moment of searching, he saw a black shape coming toward him. He watched as Hicca and her dragon landed in front of him with a slight bump. Looking into the face of his child, he was met with a warm and proud smile. She had done it. She had rescued them as she said she would. He couldn't believe how capable she had become.

_That's my girl. _"Well done Hicca," he told her with pride in his voice.

Dismounting her dragon, Hicca beamed with pride and appreciation at his praise. Walking over to him, she stopped and looked up into his eyes. Then without warning, and to Stoick's surprise, she threw her arms around him as far as they could go.

"Thanks dad," she said honestly.

Stoick stood there frozen by her sudden display of affection. With his arms hanging at his sides awkwardly he slowly wrapped them around her and returned her hug. When they pulled away he looked into her eye and gave her a nod. Then he placed an arm at her back and led her toward the great hall so she could tell him about the mission.

* * *

><p>"So then we got them on the ships and sailed back to Berk," Hicca said finishing her recounting of the story.<p>

Stoick, Spitelout, Gobber, Ash, Snotlout, and Hicca were all seated at a table in the great hall as Hicca told them about their mission. All around the Hooligan medics were taking a look at their visitors and the cooks were preparing and serving them hot meals.

"That was some good thinking Hicca," Gobber said impressed. Hicca smiled and thanked him.

"So what do we now Stoick?" Spitelout asked.

"We send messages to the other tribes that their families are safe and on Berk. With his leverage gone, Siver will have to come to us. So we wait and be ready," Stoick said firmly. The other nodded in agreement with his plan.

"I say we keep the pressure on," Hicca said speaking up. When the others looked at her inquisitively, she elaborated. "I found this in the prison," she said while she pulled out a scroll from her pouch behind her. Unrolling it and spreading it out, the others saw that it was a map with various islands marked and writing on it.

"I think that these are minor bases, armories, and food stores for Siver's men," Hicca explained. "Dad, the ice is about to set in soon right?" she asked her father. He nodded in confirmation and she continued, "Perfect. With the ice setting in Siver can't attack us for a while. But with our dragons, we can get at him. I say we hit these places. If we're lucky we might find him there. But even if we don't we'll be cutting into his resources. He'll have no choice but to come out of hiding to respond," she reasoned.

The others considered her strategy. It made a lot of sense. They could put a hurt on Siver. They could keep him on the ropes. And it seemed as if Hicca was determined to see this through. That meant she planned on sticking around for a while.

"I say we do it," Stoick said firmly. "But we'll wait for the ice to set in. Agreed?" he said looking around the table. Everyone nodded in confirmation. With that, Stoick excused himself from the table and started to see if their guests were alright. Spitelout, Snotlout, and Gobber got up to go get some riders and start sending messages to the other tribes.

"Soooo," Ash said getting Hicca's attention. They were alone at the table now and Ash had something on his mind. When Hicca looked to him, he asked, "You are planning on staying right?" he asked.

"Hmmm," Hicca said tapping her chin in mock thought. "I guess. I still don't know if want to rejoin the tribe just yet, but I want to get this Siver guy," she said resolutely. "I guess you're stuck with me until then," she said with a smirk.

Ash smiled. He was glad Hicca was staying. It meant he could keep courting her, and hopefully he could give her a reason to stay on Berk. Suddenly Hicca stood up and looked down at him expectantly. Ash raised an eyebrow at her expectant look.

"I believe I owe you a kiss," she said with a flirtatious smile. Then she turned on her heel and started walking toward the exit of the great hall. Ash watched her walk away before rising and following after her. He hoped Hicca was leading them somewhere more private.

* * *

><p>A week later, the different tribes came to pick up their families. Unfortunately, not everyone had a husband and father waiting for them. The Hooligans had killed some of them and they had poisoned themselves when they were still working for Siver. The families understood and didn't hold a grudge against the Hooligans. They were just grateful that they had helped them. When Stoick asked them what they planned to do next, the tribes informed them that they planned to temporarily unite into one tribe to protect themselves and their families from Siver.<p>

As Hicca and Ash watched the other tribes sail away, they were also saying goodbye to Heath. Though Ash was no longer threatened by him, he wanted Heath gone. Heath was throwing the last of his things into his boat as Broiler waited patiently in the water for his rider. When he was all set he turned to Hicca and Ash to say goodbye.

"Well I guess this is it then," he said with a small smile.

"You sure you don't wanna stay a bit longer Heath?" Hicca asked politely. He knew Ash wanted Heath gone but he had been so helpful that she felt they owed him some hospitality.

"Nah. Gotta a reputation to keep and there are tribes to keep an eye on. Plus I want to find this Siver guy," he said rejecting her offer.

They nodded in acceptance. "Well if you need anything or you find him, let us know," Hicca said.

Heath smiled. "Oh you'll be the first people to hear if I find him," then he reached out and took Hicca's hand in his. To Ash's chagrin, he bent down and kissed her hand before grinning up at her. Hicca blushed lightly and smiled.

Standing upright he looked to Ash and extended his hand. "Good to see you again Ash. Nice working with you too," he said honestly.

Ash looked down at his hand and made no move. But with a defeated sigh, he relented and took his hand and gave it a shake. "It was good to see you too Heath. Take care," he said.

Heath nodded before turned around and looked at Broiler. The dragon lowered his head down to the docks, allowing Heath to climb on his head and walk down his neck and jump into his saddle. With one last smile to Hicca and Ash, he patted Broiler on the neck to get his attention and then pointed to his boat. Broiler nodded before lowering himself in the water slightly and tensing his muscles. Then leaping out of the water, he flapped his wings and got airborne. Then he grabbed Heath's boat by the mast before lifting it into the air and flying away from Berk.

"I still don't like that guy," Ash muttered quietly as they watched

him fly away.

Hicca chuckled and elbowed him in the ribs. He chuckled back.

"So what do you want to do now?" he asked Hicca curiously.

Hicca remained silent for a moment and tapped her chin in thought. "You wanna make out?" she asked.

Ash's eyes widened in surprise as he looked at her. He thought she was joking. Hicca had yet to kiss him on the lips, save for the first time they fought. "Ha good one Hicca," he said with a laugh. When he searched her face, he saw that it didn't look like she was joking.

"Suit yourself then," she said with a playful smile and a shrug. Then she turned around and started walking back up the docks.

Ash watched her go. He still wasn't sure if she was being serious or not. "Hicca! Did you mean that? Hicca!?" he called before running after her.

* * *

><p>Here you go everyone. New chapter. Hope yuo like. The next chapter or two will probably be jsut Hiccstrid moments.

18. Chapter 18

Getting Closer

As the riders waited for the ice to set in, thing in the village went back to normal. The village was still on guard for the Scarred Ones, but they were in pretty high spirits. Hicca was starting to integrate herself in the village once again. She took her old job back as Gobber's apprentice, joined the riders on patrol, taught classes at the academy, continued her lessons with her peers, and participated in the dragon races. Hicca always won the races.

Stoick was happy that Hicca had decided to stay. Slowly she had begun to warm up to him. She still slept in her old room and they would often eat breakfast together, sometime Hicca would even cook for him. He felt that they were a family once again. She still hadn't officially joined the tribe, but Stoick didn't push her. Not after how badly he messed up last time. He figured she would rejoin when she was ready.

Hicca and Ash also grew much closer. While still not officially a thing just yet, everyone in the village could see how much they were infatuated with each other. They would spend almost all their free time together and everyone started to see the change in Ash's hard stony exterior. Hicca was bringing out a warmer softer side to the young man. She was bringing out the best in him.

Much to Ash's annoyance many tribes had heard of the return of the chief of Berk's only daughter and many of them had sent suitors in hopes of marrying her. Of course with Hicca an adult and not a member of the tribe he couldn't force her into a marriage, not that he

wanted to anyway. Any persistence suitors would be politely but firmly turned down by Hicca herself. Or scared away by the menacing glare of Ash holding his trusty axe.

Ash wasn't too threatened by the suitors, Hicca had made it abundantly clear that she liked him alone. But that didn't mean he couldn't send a message. When alone Hicca would continue to let Ash cover her neck in his love marks and would return them with kisses on his cheek, neck, and jawline. Though Ash really wanted to make their relationship official he didn't push it. He was content with slowly building up their relationship while earning her kisses as rewards for showing his softer side to her.

Currently Ash and his friends were seated at their usual table in the great hall. He was eating his food and talking to his friends as he waited for Hicca. Suddenly the doors of the great hall opened and he turned to see Hicca enter. She was carrying a basket with her and he was curious as to what was in it. He expected her to make a beeline toward their table but instead she went to the table where her father was seated.

As Hicca walked up to his table Stoick noticed her and smiled at her. Coming up to his side he greeted her. "Well hello sweetie," Stoick said affectionately.

Hicca smiled up at him. "Hey dad. I made something for you," she said before opening her basket and pulling out a covered plate of food. She set it down in front of him and removed the cloth to reveal some strange grainy white food packed into a ball like shape. "This is a food from Japan called O-nigiri," she explained. "I got some rice from trader Johan a while ago," she added.

Stoick looked down at the foreign food before shrugging and taking one of the five balls in his hand. Lifting it to his mouth, he took a bite. It was good. Very good. "Mmmmm. Why thank you Hicca. This is some good stuff," he told her with a smile before taking another bite.

"Thanks dad," she said in appreciation. With a final smile she headed to sit with Ash and the riders. Stoick watched her go with a smile. Suddenly he noticed a hand reaching out for his plate. Turning to his left he saw Gobber reaching out to grab one of his rice balls. With a shove he glowered at Gobber, "Get your own," he muttered before grabbing another rice ball and taking a bite.

When Hicca reached her friend's table she smiled at them and greeted them before taking a seat next to Ash. They greeted her back and watched as she started to empty the contents of her basket. She pulled out a large topped ceramic bowl and a plate full of strange balls.

"What ya got there Hicca?" Ash asked inquisitively.

She turned to him and smiled and held up the plate for him. "They're rice balls. Try one," she said offering him a ball. He smiled and took one before taking a bite of it.

He tasted it and liked it. "Wow Hicca, these are great." He told her with a smile. Hicca blushed and smiled shyly at him. She liked hearing him praise her cooking skills.

"Can I try one?" Fishlegs asked.

Hicca turned to the others and smiled. "Sure, here you go," she said sliding the plate toward them. They all took a rice ball and gave it a bite. Their faces lit up as they all loved them. They praised her on her cooking and thanked her. Hicca accepted their thanks and took one for herself. Enjoying one of her favorite meals, she couldn't help but think about Japan. She would often enjoy a rice ball with her sister. She missed Mayumi dearly. But Berk was beginning to feel like a real home. One where people wanted her around and filled her heart with a sense of warmth and welcome.

Finishing her rice ball, she reached out for her ceramic bowl and with a twist removed the top. In it was a steaming bowl of one of her other favorite foods. The other looked into Hicca's bowl and saw that it was some kind of broth. They watched curiously as Hicca reached into her basket and pulled out two sticks. Then she placed them in her hands and dipped it into the bowl. When she pulled the sticks out there was some kind of stringy stuff between the sticks. Hicca blew on them before bringing it up to her lips and slurping them into her mouth. Her face formed into one of pure delight as she seemed to really enjoy the dish. She then eagerly dug into the bowl again for more.

"What's that Hicca?" Ash asked pointing to the broth.

Hicca paused in her eating and turned to smile at him. "It's called Ramen. It's a delicious broth in Japan made with this stuff made from flour into these things called noodles," Hicca explained. She paused to slurp up some more before continuing. "It's really good," she said.

Ash looked into the broth she was enjoying and became curious. "Can I have some?" he asked.

Hicca smiled and the bowl so it was in between them and moved closer to him. "Sure, we can share," she said.

Ash smiled and grabbed his fork. Dipping it in he managed to get some in between its teeth before bringing it up to his mouth. Blowing on it he then slurped it up. It was very tasty. He could detect the trace of beef in the broth along with some familiar and some unknown spices. He smiled warmly at Hicca before they both started to dig in. As they enjoyed the ramen the other riders started talking amongst themselves.

Fishlegs was going on about the dragon migration that occurred around Snoggletog. He recounted how everyone had been surprised when the dragons suddenly up and left within the few months after their peace with them. Everyone had been so sad and sure they had been abandoned. But within a couple of weeks the dragons had returned with their offspring, much to the joy of the tribe. Hicca was aware of the yearly migrations, having traveled around the archipelago for a few months after her battle with the Red Death they stumbled upon the massive flocks and followed them to their nesting island.

Snotlout piped in and talked about how some of the children were begging him to give them some of Hoofang's offspring when the dragons returned. Apparently he had them practically on their hands and

knees, a fact that he seemed to enjoy.

Tuffnut stood up and showed everyone the new leather belt he had made, having become a skilled leather worker along with his dragon training profession. He seemed to be very proud of his skills in his profession and the village seemed to really like his work.

As the other spoke, Hicca and Ash listened as they steadily slurped up their meal. Then simultaneously, they each put a strand full of noodles in their mouth. Unbeknownst to them there was a freakishly long noodle that each of them had put into their mouths. Slurping up the noodle and not paying attention their heads followed until faces were being pulled together. Realizing only when their noses were practically touching and their lips had brushed together for a fraction of a second, they froze. Eyes wide, they started at each other as their faces turned a deep crimson. Biting through their own end of the noodle they immediately scooted away from each other and looked away shyly while mumbling apologies under their breaths.

The other chuckled and rolled their eyes. They didn't get why they just didn't get together already. They obviously had a thing for each other.

Hicca looked at Ash out of the corner of her eyes and her corner of her mouth twitched upward into a small smile. She liked Ash a lot. She was the reason they weren't officially a couple just yet. As much as she liked him, she wanted to wait until Ash fully had her heart. And the crafty bastard was steadily getting there. One day soon, she knew that he was going to steal it from her. The thought both excited and terrified her at the same time. Feeling brave she quickly leaned over and planted a kiss on his cheek.

Ash's head shot up and his eyes went wide as he felt Hicca's lips on his cheek. Hicca had never kissed him in public before, besides the one night after the raid. She always led Ash to a secluded area before she did it. He looked over to her and saw a smile on her face. He couldn't help but smile back.

Hicca giggled at his look of adoration. The others gagged and groaned. They couldn't get why Ash just didn't tell her he loved her already. Hicca and him were practically a couple already.

Ash continued to smile at her before he reached for his fork and was about to dip it into the bowl to continue eating the ramen when Hicca suddenly pulled the bowl away from him.

"Mine," she said playfully.

"Aw come on Hicca, don't be greedy," he chastised her. Hicca only stuck her tongue out him. He tried to reach over and get into her bowl but she blocked him with her arms.

"Mine," she said before slurping more noodles into her mouth. She started digging in as fast as she could as Ash tried to get some more.

All around the great hall, their tribesman laughed and shook their heads as they watched their chief's daughter and Ash. _Practically a couple_, they all thought to themselves.

* * *

><p>A few days later, it was relatively warm for a day on Berk, especially since the ice was due to set in within two weeks' time. Hicca awoke to a pleasant sunny morning. Getting up, she got ready for the day. She washed herself before dressing in her Viking attire and wrapping a green scarf Ash had given to her around her neck. Then she looked into a polished sheet of silver to check her appearance. On a whim she decided to wear her hair down today to see what Ash thought. Taking a brush out, she began to run it through her hair. Toothless watched her curiously as she prettied herself up and huffed at her.<p>

"Not today hun'," she told him. The dragon grumbled a little bit but settled down. He understood that Hicca liked to have some time to herself. After brushing her hair to a satisfying sheen, she nodded in satisfaction. Reaching into a drawer on her table she began to apply some of the purple eye shadow she had keep from the tavern. After applying it, she checked herself in the mirror before smiling in satisfaction. With that, she turned and walked over to Toothless. She gave him a kiss on the snout before exiting her room and going down the stairs. With the window open Toothless would go about his own business when he was ready.

Exiting her house, she made her way through the village in search of Ash. As she went, the men of the village turned their heads as she passed. Hicca had grown into quite the woman. Before, they only looked at her with annoyance and disdain. Now her looks were quite appealing. She was pretty. Hicca was indifferent to their looks. The only person whose opinion mattered was Ash's.

As she walked around in search of Ash a villager informed her that he and his friends went to a beach at the west of the island. After thanking the villager she headed there herself. She was glad she decided not to fly there, as it would have messed up her hair. She hoped Ash would notice and like it. She also hoped the eye shadow would bring out her eyes.

When she got to the beach she scanned the sands in search of her friends and spotted the shapes of their dragons in the distance. Walking over to them she could make out her friends swimming in the water as their dragons sunbathed themselves. As she drew nearer, the dragons noticed her and turned to greet her. They rumbles, purred, and squawked at her in greeting and she smile back in acknowledgement. The dragons all remembered her as the human who freed them and were quite fond of her. Hookfang bumped her stomach with his snout for some attention which she obliged him by scratching him under the chin.

"Hey Hicca," she heard Ash call out. Ash she turned to look at him, she froze and her breath caught in her throat.

His shirt was off and he was wearing only some knee length trousers. The world seemed to slow down as he rose out of the water. She stared at his bare muscled chest as he came toward her. He threw his hair back and out of his face and the sun hit it and made it sparkle and shine like gold. The muscles in his arms tensed and relaxed and he looked like a god. As he came closer, he smiled at her and his teeth seemed to sparkle.

When he finally reached her, she released a dreamy sigh and a goofy grin was plastered on her face. She didn't register his question as he asked her something. She just continued to stare at him in utter womanly adoration.

"Hicca?" he said again to get her attention.

Finally snapping from her stupor she cleared her throat and stood up straight. Looking him in the eye she smiled back and said, "Hey Ash. Nice day isn't it," she said trying to sound casual.

"Yep," Ash answered.

"Still. I don't get why you guys are swimming. Isn't it cold?" she asked.

"You've been in Japan too long," Ash said with a chuckle. "It's always cold. But it'll be even colder when the ice sets in. Then it will be impossible to go swimming," he explained like if it were the most obvious thing.

"Oh right," she said embarrassed. Then straightening up she put her hand behind her back and smiled up at Ash. "So Ash, notice anything different about me today?" she asked nonchalantly.

Ash cocked his head to the side and looked her over. He couldn't put his finger on it, but he felt there was something different. "Not really," he said with a shrug.

Hicca's face fell for a moment before her smile returned and she tried again. "Are you sure?" she asked while batting her eyelashes at him to draw attention to her eyes. She also tucked some stray strands of her hair behind her ear.

Ash tapped his chin in thought as he took another look. Then it struck him, "Oh, you're wearing that scarf I got you. It looks nice," he said to her.

Hicca's face fell into a frown. Well at least he had noticed the scarf. But how could he not notice how she had fixed herself up a little? Did she not look any different to him? Feeling offended, she stomped her foot in annoyance. "Ugh. Never mind Ash," she said facing away from him and crossing her arms over her chest.

Ash raised an eyebrow at her strange behavior. He couldn't understand what she was getting at. With a shrug he waved it off. Then as he stared at her his face broke into a mischievous grin. "Oh, I know what it is," he said casually.

Hicca turned around hopeful and smiled. So he had noticed. Better late than never. "Really?" she asked.

"Yep," he said taking a step closer to her. "You're not wet," he said holding his smile.

Hicca noticed the look in his eyes and took a wary step back. "You wouldn't dare," she said lowly. Then Ash reached out and grabbed her before throwing her over his shoulder. Hicca was too surprised by the move to react. That when he started walking toward the water. "Put me down Ash," she yelled as she flailed her legs about in an attempt to

get free.

"Oh I'll put you down alright," Ash said with a laugh.

"Ash Hofferson, if you put me in that water you're going to get it," she warned him as she pounded her fist against his lower back. Without the proper leverage she couldn't put much force behind her blows and Ash wasn't bothered by it. She shrieked as Ash charged into the water before throwing her off his shoulder and in. Hicca mentally screamed at the temperature of the water. It was freezing. Breaking the surface, the water was up to her waist and she was soaked. The others laughed at her appearance and she gave them all a death glare. Then her focus turned to Ash who was still smiling to himself.

Immediately she charged him and jumped on him. Placing her hand on his shoulder she pushed down and forced him under in surprise. He broke the surface a moment later and laughed at her. "Are you trying to drown me Hicca?"

"Yes Ash. I'm going to kill you. Die!" she told him angrily. Ash just continued to laugh. Shaking himself free he got away from her and started swimming away. Hicca immediately jumped and paddled after him. "Get back here Ash!" she shouted as she swam after her target with murder in her eyes.

* * *

><p>"Oh come on Hicca!" Ash said following after the angry girl as they made their way back to the village. After 30 minutes of attempting to drown him, Hicca had given up her pursuit and stomped back toward the village. Ash immediately followed after her as attempted to appease her. He didn't know why she was so angry. It was all in good fun.<p>

Hicca walked ahead of him with her arms over her chest and a scowl on her face. All her work and Ash hadn't even noticed. Worse, he had ruined it by throwing her in the ocean. Her hair was now all frizzy and her makeup had washed off and run. Hicca was not happy with Ash.

"Hicca," Ash pleaded as he came to her right side. Hicca turned her head in the other direction and continued to ignore him. Behind the pair, Stormfly was watching curiously and cocking her head to the side as she wondered why they hadn't flown back to the village.

As they came back to the village they were met with the curious stared of the other villagers. They were chuckling as they saw that Ash was being given the cold shoulder. They wondered what he had done now.

"Hicca. At least tell me what I did," Ash begged. She was completely ignoring him. He at least wanted to know why. As Hicca reached her home she walked up the stair to her door. "Did I do or say something wrong Hicca?" Ash asked in a last ditch effort to understand what he'd done.

Hicca whirled around with a snarl on her face. "You didn't DO anything Ash. And you didn't SAY anything either. That's what you did," he hissed angrily before stepping inside her house and slamming

the door in his face.

Ash stunned there stunned at her outburst before furrowing her eyebrows in confusion. If he hadn't done or said anything wrong, why was she so mad? "Yeah because that makes perfect sense," he mumbled to himself.

As he turned around to go about his own business he almost bumped into his chief. Looking up into the chief's face he was met with a stern look. "Ok lad, what you did now?" he asked.

Ash was offended by the question. Why did he assume he had done something wrong? "Nothing chief," she said.

"That kind of behavior doesn't occur because of nothing lad. Now what did you do?" he repeated.

Ash mouth was open in shock. Why was he the bad guy here? He had just had a little fun with her and she flew off the handle. "I just threw her into the water and she got all angry," Ash said grumpily. Stoick raised an eyebrow skeptically. As he was about to press him for more details, Ruffnut interrupted.

"Ugh, typical man," she said rolling her eyes at Ash. "It's obvious what you did," she said with a snort. Behind her were the other riders who had followed the pair after they had left.

"Completely," Snotlout said.

"Totally," Fishlegs said with a neutral face.

"Even I know what you did," Tuffnut told Ash.

Ash glared at his friends. What was he missing here? What could be so obvious to everyone that even Tuffnut could see it? "Care to enlighten me then?" he asked in irritation as he looked to Ruffnut.

"She wore her hair down today Ash. She also wore some eye shadow. It's obvious she wanted you to notice," she explained like he was an idiot.

"Oh boy. That explains it," the chief said with a sigh before palming his forehead.

Ash processed what Ruffnut told him and thought back to Hicca's appearance. _CRAP!_ "Oh gods," Ash said smacking his forehead. How could that have slipped by him? The batting of the eyes, the brushing of the hair out of her face. Whirling around, he looked up to his chief in desperation. "What do I do chief?"

"Two words Ash. Grovel and beg," the chief said imparting his wisdom. Then he turned around while shaking his head and went on his way. Poor lad didn't understand women at all. He'd been the same way as a boy himself though. He silently wished him luck.

"Guys help me," he cried to his friends.

The other just shook their heads and started walking away. They didn't want to get in the middle of this. "Ruffnut please," he said

taking a hold of her wrist. The female twin turned to look at him. She saw the desperation in his eyes. _Pathetic,_ she thought to herself. With a sigh she relented.

"You might still have time to fix your mistake. I suggest you get some flowers and give her an hour to cool down," she told him before yanking her wrist free and walking away. "And clean yourself up!" she called back not turning around.

Ash processed what she said before leaping into action. He ran back to his house to get in a quick wash. Then he would get some flowers.

* * *

><p>An hour later Hicca was sitting in her room brushing her hair. She had taken a bath and washed her hair after she had gotten back and was feeling less murderous now. She was still peeved at Ash for his apparent lack of interest in her appearance. All her efforts were wasted. After growing up being ignored by everyone, Hicca loved receiving attention. Especially from Ash. But it felt just like when they were kids and he was indifferent to her existence. Hicca sighed to herself as she continued to brush her hair.<p>

Suddenly a knock came from her door. Getting up she went down the stair to answer it. Opening the door, she immediately slammed it when she could make out a red shirt and golden hair. "Go away Ash!" she shouted angrily.

"Hicca. Please," came his plea.

With a grumble she opened the door and was met with a bouquet of red, green, and yellow flowers in her face. She stared at the flowers, waiting for the man on the other side to say something. She crossed her arms over chest and waited.

Ash pulled the flowers back and smiled up at her sheepishly. Her frown was very disheartening as he tried to think of something to say. "I know what I did," she muttered quietly.

"Baka," Hicca said sharply.

"Yes, I'm an idiot," Ash admitted. '_Grovel and Beg_', he told himself quoting Stoick's advice. "Forgive me?" he asked hopefully.

Hicca continued to frown at him. He started to fidget from her gaze when she released a sigh and reached out to take the flowers. "I'm going to put these in some water," she said before turning around and going back into her house. She left the door wide open. Ash took that as sign for him to enter. Going in, he shut the door behind him quietly.

He looked into the kitchen and saw Hicca place the flowers in a vase. Then she went and sat down on her living room's couch. Her arms were still crossed over her chest and she remained silent. Ash shifted on his feet awkwardly, unsure of what to do. Then after a bit of hesitation he slowly made his way over to the couch. Seeing that she didn't pull away or glare, he figured he was on the right track.

Slowly he sat down on the other end of the couch. She didn't look at him. "Ummâ€¦I like that shirt," she said awkwardly. It was a light blue tunic. She wasn't wearing her green one since it was wet and soaked in sea water.

"Oh, so you noticed that did you?" she asked sharply.

"And your hair was really shiny today. And your eyes. With that eye shadow. Prettiest green I've ever seen," he said chuckling lightly. She just sat there stiffly. "You always look beautiful," he said to her honestly. "Always," he added for extra effect.

At that, Hicca's shoulders relaxed slightly. Then she turned to look at him. He figured that was a good sign. Scooting a bit closer, he started trying to come up with more things to say. "And you have a pretty hair color. When the sun hits it, it lights up like fire," he said. A small smile formed on Hicca face for a second before she wiped it away. "Yeah, and you have an amazing figure. And you're so smart. And you're awesome. So awesome. And you're the most amazing woman in all the world," he told her in earnest. Between each compliment, he had scooted a bit closer to her. Now he was shoulder to shoulder with her.

Hicca was blushing now. His words were making it hard for her to stay mad at him. She couldn't hide the smile that had formed on her face. Taking a gamble he bent down to kiss her cheek. Hicca was always the one to initiate a kiss. Slowly, he brought his lips to meet her cheek. To his elation she didn't pull away. She seemed to relax as she released a contented sigh. Seeing that as a good sign, he pulled her into his lap and trailed kissed down her cheek and along her jaw line. Hicca relaxed in his arms and he guessed that he'd been forgiven.

Feeling brave he started to nuzzle her neck. His stubble tickled her and a smile formed on her face. Then he started to kiss, suck, and nip at her skin. Hicca shuddered and gasped at his actions. Then Ash licked at her skin. Hicca moaned and bit her lip as her body started to heat up and she started to lose herself in the sensations of Ash's affections.

"Baka," Hicca breathed out between moans.

Ash nodded in agreement but didn't stop. He was just thankful that Hicca had forgiven him.

Thank you gods.

* * *

><p>Hope you guys like. i wan show some progress in their
reltionship.

19. Chapter 19

****Snoggletog****

It was the day before Snoggletog. A yearly celebration all Vikings threw. The ice had finally set in and it was decided that the riders

would attack the Scarred Ones after their dragons returned. Ash had woken up early that morning to get in a flight with Stormfly. She and all the other dragons would be leaving about midday like they always did and he wanted to spend as much time with her as possible. As they flew through the skies together Ash thought about tomorrow. He smiled to himself as the thought of Hicca actually being there made him happy. He wanted to spend it with her. He had even gotten her a gift. He really hoped she would like it. He also wondered if she had gotten anything for him. Honestly, Ash really only wanted one thing for Snoggletog. A kiss on the lips from Hicca.

With midday approaching, Ash decided to head back. He didn't want to be caught on Stormfly when the migration started. Landing at his house, he unsaddled Stormfly and gave a melancholy sigh. He always missed her when she left. She always came back a few weeks later and he knew it was for a good reason, but not being able to fly with her made it feel like a part of him was missing. Stormfly sensed Ash's mood and nudged him between the shoulder blades. Ash turned around and smiled at her. Reaching a hand out, he stroked her snout and gave her a scratch. She purred in pleasure at his attention.

"Sorry girl, I just miss you when you leave," he told her sadly. Stormfly looked into his eyes and gave him a reassuring squawk. She would always come back to him. Ash got the message and smiled. "Let's go find Hicca girl," he told her. She squawked in agreement and followed after him. All around the villagers were setting up decorations. The kids were having snowball fights and playing with the dragons as much as they could before they left. In the center of town a giant tree was being set up and shields were being nailed to it as decorations. Everyone was in high spirits despite the impending departure of the dragons. They had grown accustomed to it by now. And the dragons always came back.

Looking around and smiling at the festive atmosphere Ash was suddenly hit with a snowball from behind. Whirling around with a glare he looked for the one who had thrown the snowball. He couldn't make out anyone who was close enough to have thrown it at him. Suddenly to his right a snowball hit him on the arm. He immediately turned to his right and there was still no one.

"Alright who's throwing the snowballs?" he called out. He turned his head this way and that to find his attacker. From behind him another snowball hit him in the head and exploded into powder. Ash whirled around and still couldn't find anyone. He was starting to get seriously pissed when a familiar giggle could be heard.

"Hicca?" he called out still looking around. He got no response. After a few moments he was hit by another snowball from behind in the back. "Hicca where are you?" he shouted out with a smile. She was messing with him. He scanned all around looking for a familiar black but couldn't find her. She should have been sticking out like crazy with the whole village covered in white snow.

"I don't know Ash. Where am I indeed?" Hicca called out playfully.

He wasn't bothered anymore since he knew it as Hicca throwing snowballs at him. But still, he was determined to find her. His eyes narrowed in challenge. "Stormfly," he said to get his dragon's attention. Behind him the dragon perked up and squawked

inquisitively. "Find Hicca girl," he ordered.

The dragon cocked its head to the side before obeying. Lifting her head up, she began sniffing the air. Then she stalked forward while sweeping her head back and forth and sniffing. Then she dropped her head to the ground and began sniffing. Slowly she began making her way to a house with piles of snow on the side of it. Coming to a patch of snow Stormfly's head lifted up and she began squawking excitedly.

"No Stormfly. Go away, shoo, shoo," Ash could hear Hicca whisper. He still couldn't see her though. He narrowed his eyes as Stormfly started to nudge something with her head. Then slowly but surely, Ash could make out something moving in the whiteness. Rubbing his eyes and focusing he could make out the outline of a person. Then suddenly Hicca's head appeared. Walking up to him with a smile and Stormfly right behind her Ash finally saw that she was wearing an all-white version of her ninja outfit. That's why he couldn't see her.

"Hey Ash," she said casually.

"Hey Hicca," he said in greeting. "I like the new outfit," he said gesturing to her attire.

"Thanks. Special snow camo," she explained. Sometimes, ninja missions took them to mountainous regions covered in snow, thus a white version of a ninja outfit came in handy.

Ash nodded in understanding. Suddenly a loud roar caught their attention. Looking up to the sky, they saw a massive amount of dragons passing over Berk. They heard the roar of a Nightmare signaling the start of the migration. Then driven by instinct, the dragons of Berk took to the sky. Some waited to give their riders a nudge of goodbye. Ash's face fell as he knew what was coming. Stormfly came up to his side and gave him a sad squawk.

"It's alright girl. Go on," he told her. She hesitated before giving him an affectionate nuzzle. Then she turned and with a running start took to the sky. Joining her fellow dragons she flew away from Berk and quickly disappeared.

Ash released a sad sigh. He was going to miss her.

"You ok Ash?" Hicca asked at his side.

Turning to face her, he was met with concerned eyes. "Yeah. I just miss her when she leaves. I know she'll come back. She always does. But I hate being grounded," he explained.

Hicca looked up at him and could see how much he was missing her already. Taking a step toward him she kissed him on the cheek. It seemed to cheer him up as his face formed into a smile. She smiled back, glad she had managed to make him smile. "Well, Toothless and I will have to be your wings then. At least until she returns," Hicca offered.

Ash smiled and nodded in acceptance. "So Toothless didn't go on the migration?" he asked curiously.

She shook her head. "Nah. He doesn't have a mate so I guess he

doesn't see a reason to go. I even built him a tailfin he could fully operate on his own and asked him if he wanted to go but he said no," she told him.

"You can do that?" he asked referring to the tailfin.

She put her hands on her hips and made a face of mock offense. "Of course I can."

"Ok sorry, I didn't mean to doubt your godly smithing skills," he said raising up his arms submissively. She smiled to show she was just teasing and he relaxed.

Ash suddenly remembered he wanted to ask her to spend Snoggletog with him. Fidgeting, he rubbed the back of his neck and flushed. "So Hicca," he began.

"Yes Ash?" she asked cocking her head to the side curiously.

"Snoggletog is tomorrow," he said fiddling with his hands and not looking her in the eye.

"I grew up here Ash. I know that already," she said with an amused smirk.

"Right, Right," he said embarrassed. "But I was wondering. If you wanted to spend itâ€¦with me," he said nervously.

Hicca kept her expression blank as she mulled it over. He was asking to spend the holiday together. Snoggletog was a special time of the year for couples. Her face broke into a wide grin. "I'd love to Ash."

Ash cheered mentally at her answer. He was so glad she had said yes. They then both started heading toward the great hall. "So, did you get me anything for Snoggletog?" Hicca asked playfully.

"Maybe I did, maybe I didn't," Ash told her cryptically. She wrinkled her nose in distaste at his answer.

"Did you get me anything?" he asked her back.

"Yes I did," she told him matter of factly.

Ash was slightly surprised by her blatant admission. He wondered what it was. But with a shrug he decided to wait until tomorrow. Glancing out of the corner of his eye, he smiled to himself. He couldn't express how happy he was to have Hicca around to celebrate the holiday with. Normally he would be totally bummed about Stormfly leaving. But with Hicca around, he just couldn't feel too sad or melancholy about anything.

* * *

><p>It was the day of Snoggletog. All around the villagers were excited and feeling the holiday spirit. While they missed their beloved companions dearly they wouldn't let their absence ruin the jovial atmosphere.<p>

As Ash walked through the village, people called out to him wishing him a happy Snoggletog. He would smile back and wish them a happy holiday too. He was excited for the celebration tonight. He would spend it with Hicca, and hopefully he could get a real kiss from her. He was actually on his way to see her now. They had spent all day yesterday. They went on a flight with Toothless, ate together, then they snuck off for some alone time together. He liked their alone time the best. Still, he was happy that Hicca had become more open about displaying affection. He also started initiating some of their kisses now. Hicca didn't seem to mind it at all.

He made his way to the forge. Checking inside, he looked around for Hicca. He couldn't hear her working. There actually wasn't any sound of metal work coming from inside. "Gobber, ya there?" Ash called out.

He heard some shuffling from the back of the forge before Gobber popped out. "Ah, what can I do for you Ash?" Gobber asked with a smile. He was dressed up for the holiday. His prosthetic hand was a stick with bells attached to it. He also had a head piece with deer antlers. Gobber always got really into the spirit of the holiday.

"Have you seen Hicca?"

Gobber rubbed his chin in thought. "I believe she's with her father right now," he told him.

Ash nodded and turned to go find her. "Thanks Gobber," he called back. Suddenly a firm hand grabbed him by on the shoulder and stopped him in his tracks. Glancing behind him, he looked at Gobber inquisitively, wondering why he was stopping him.

"Easy there lad. I know you and Hicca are sweet on each other, but Stoick and she haven't spent Snoggletog together in a long time. They need time alone, to be a family," he said wisely.

Ash mulled over what Gobber had said. He was probably right. Her father had probably missed her as much, if not more, than he ever did. They needed time together. He nodded in understanding.

"So what did you get Hicca lad?" he asked with a playful smile.

"I got some stuff from trader Johan," he said simply. "One of the things is from Japan," he elaborated.

With that, he informed Gobber about what he planned on gifting Hicca. Gobber congratulated him on his ideas. He believed his former apprentice would like them. He was honestly rooting for Ash. Hicca deserved someone doting over her, and in his opinion, Ash was the best man for the job.

As long as he didn't screw it up again that is.

* * *

><p>It was the evening now. Most of the village was in the great hall. All around the villagers were laughing, drinking, and feasting as they got into the mood of the holiday. No one was in greater spirits than their chief. They could see it in the way he laughed and

smiled. Every year on Snoggletog the chief always had an air of sadness about him. Everyone knew the reason being his lost child. He had had no one to spend it with. No one to give a gift to. Those had been lonely nights for the chief despite being surrounded by people who cared for him.<p>

But now things had changed. His child had returned to him. Waking up that morning to a cooked breakfast and his daughter's smile had been the greatest Snoggletog gift he could ever ask for. He was so thankful that she had come back. So thankful that somewhere deep down she had forgiven him and given him another chance. He had a family again. He had his daughter back. It had gotten even better when Hicca presented him with her handcrafted gift. A long and incredibly sharp pole arm she called a Naginata. He couldn't believe the quality of the metal and craftsmanship. She said that it was a weapon capable of slicing through a man's skull in the blink of eye. He had loved it.

"Chief," came a voice pulling him from his thoughts. Turning his head he saw Ash approaching.

"Ah Ash, Happy Snoggletog lad," he said with a jovial smile. "What can I do for you?"

"Happy Snoggletog chief. I was just wondering if you'd seen Hicca." Ash said.

"Well we spent the morning together. Then she left about midday to go about her own business. I assumed she went to go find you," he said rubbing his bearded chin.

Ash frowned at this. He had been searching for her for hours. Apparently no one had seen her. "That's weird," he muttered to himself. "Well, thanks anyway chief," he said respectfully before turning to walk away.

"Oh, and Ash," Stoick said stopping him. When Ash turned to look him in the eye, he continued, "Thanks for understanding. I haven't spent a holiday with my daughter in a long time," he said with a solemn smile. Ash nodded in understanding before walking to a table to sit with his friends.

They greeted him and he acknowledged them with a nod. He was a little grumpy at not having seen Hicca all day. She said they would spend the holiday together. There was still time, but no one had even seen her.

"You ok Ash?" Snotlout asked noticing his unhappy expression.

"Just haven't seen Hicca," he said in irritation.

"Yeah, I haven't seen my sister either," Tuffnut said with a shrug.

That made Ash curious. He wondered if they were together. What in the Hel were they doing? With a sigh he started talking to his friends and settling in his seat. After 20 minutes of casual conversation with his friends the whole great hall went silent and a gasp escaped the villagers' mouths. Ash looked around to see everyone staring at the entrance to the great hall. Looking there himself, he couldn't

see what they were all looking at because a whole bunch of people were standing in his line of sight.

Still curious he stood up. But the others were still taller than him. Whatever it was must have been pretty damn interesting, everyone's eyes were still glued to the door. Determined to see what it was Ash started pushing his way through the crowd. When he reached the front he finally saw what it was. And his jaw hit the floor.

It was Hicca. And by the gods was she beautiful! She was wearing some kind of black robe he had never seen before. It was covered pink and violet designs in the shape of flowers and there was a yellow sash around her middle. Her hair was down and shining and she had some kind of flower decoration in her hair. He understood why everyone in the room was staring. She had a fan in front of her face and only her eyes could be seen. Her eyes swept over the crowd before she locked eyes with Ash. Ash remained frozen on the spot as she started making her way toward him. The rest of the crowd started to disperse, having overcome their shock.

When she finally reached him, she looked up into his eyes. Hers had a hint of amusement in them. "Do you like my appearance Ash?" she asked with a smile in her voice.

Ash didn't respond. All that came out was an unintelligible, "Guh." Hicca giggled behind her fan in amusement. Ash shook his head and cleared his throat to try again. "You look amazing," he told her earnestly.

Hicca closed her fan and gave him a warm smile. "Thank you Ash," she said with a blush. Her lips were painted red. He wanted to kiss her right then and there. He might pay for it later but he was willing to risk it. He was about to do it when an unwanted interruption occurred.

"What about me Ash?" came Ruffnut behind Hicca. He glanced at her for a second before refocusing his gaze on Hicca. She was wearing a similar attire but it was white with blue flower designs.

"You look fine," he said blankly as he continued to stare. Ruffnut was slightly offended by his lack of enthusiasm in his compliment but accepted it. Ash finally stopped his dumbstruck staring before gesturing to the table. Hicca nodded and they all headed there.

When they got near the table the others noticed them and their eyes went wide.

"Wow!" came a collective gasp from the boys.

Hicca and Ruffnut smiled in appreciation.

"Sis, you don't look ugly," Tuffnut said in amazement. Ruffnut walked over to him and gave him a light punch in the arm at the sideways compliment. Snotlout and Fishlegs were drooling at Ruffnut's appearance, something she took a lot of satisfaction in.

"What are you guys wearing?" Fishlegs asked curiously.

Hicca who had taken a seat next to Ash answered. "They're called Kimonos. They're worn by people in Japan. I thought they would look

nice so I took them out. With a slight adjustment we were able to make my spare one fit Ruffnut pretty well," she explained.

The others nodded. Hicca looked over to Ash and he was still staring at her. She blushed, flattered that he obviously approved of her look. "Sorry about today. I spent it with my dad and then went on a flight with Toothless before getting ready with Ruffnut," she explained. "Forgive me?" she asked with mock worry. Ash nodded in acceptance. Still too enthralled by her appearance to get angry. Hicca giggled and mimed a kiss at him.

"So no weapons tonight?" he joked. Hicca smiled mischievously before raising her closed fan up to his face. Then she opened it. So close to his face Ash could make out a metallic gleam coming from the edge of the fan. He had assumed it was made of paper, but now he could see it was metal.

"Silly Ash, I'm always carrying a weapon," she said playfully. Then she closed the fan before tucking it away in her sleeve. Ash chuckled to himself. She never ceased to amaze him. Leaning over he gave her a kiss on the cheek. She blushed and a smile formed on her face.

With that, everyone relaxed and enjoyed the festivities. The villagers sang and danced as the night wore on. Ash went and got Hicca and him some food and drink. They enjoyed it together with their friends. All throughout the night Ash couldn't take his eyes off Hicca. She was just too beautiful. Glancing down, he noticed something. Hicca's left hand was on the table. And it was very close to his right hand. He looked to Hicca's face and saw she was looking at Fishlegs who was talking about how excited he was to see Meatlug's new clutch when she returned. She didn't seem to notice their hands' close proximity.

An overwhelming urge suddenly came over Ash. Gulping nervously, he started to slowly inch his hand over to hers. He pretended to be listening to Fishlegs and nodded along with the story as he slowly inched his hand closer with his pinky. He started to sweat a little as he got his hand closer. Suddenly within a few centimeter of hers he froze. It was suddenly all too real. Gritting his teeth he tried to get his hand closer. Yet the rebellious limb wasn't responding to his commands. He glared at it as if it were a disobedient child.

Glancing back to Hicca, she still didn't give any indication that she was aware of what he was doing. Narrowing his eyes in determination he tried to will his limb into movement. Getting frustrated he punched himself in the thigh with his other hand. Why was this so damn hard? Hicca liked him. It's not like she was going to cut his hand off. His internal self-cursing was abruptly stopped when he felt a hand on his. Looking down, he saw that Hicca had placed her hand over his. Looking at her face, he saw she was smiling to herself. With a smile of his own he curled his fingers around hers. He gave her hand a gentle squeeze. One she reciprocated. She was just so amazing.

As the night wore on everyone relaxed some more as they drank some mead. This got people to joke and laugh as the worries of the day melted away. Gobber started singing songs and shanties while people joined him and clapped along. Men grabbed their wives and danced along to the livelier songs. This was undoubtedly one of the best

Snoggletog's ever. And it was all caused because of one person.

A few hours into the night, Hicca told Ash she wanted to give him his gift. Getting up, she explained that it was in the forge. With a nod, he got up to go with her. The pair said goodbye to their friends and wished them goodnight. Reaching the door, he held it open for her. She smiled in appreciation and walked out. He followed after her. The night was cold. Taking a breath they both filled their lungs with the night air. As they made their way to the forge they walked side by side. Ash looked between them and reached for her hand. He took it in his and squeezed it gently. He saw Hicca smile to herself. He was glad they had taken another small step. When they reached the forge they went in. Hicca told Ash to wait in the front while she went to her personal office to retrieve his gift.

Ash waited anxiously. He was really curious to see what it was. Plus he wanted to give Hicca her gifts. He hoped she would like them. Hicca reappeared from her workspace with a small lit candle and what looked like a sheathed curved sword. Placing the candle down on a table, she presented the sword to him. He took it, grabbing it by the sheath just beneath the guard and inspected. Holding the sheath in his left hand he gripped the hilt of the sword and pulled it out. It came out with a shink and he marveled at what he saw. It was long, curved, and looked incredibly sharp. By the weight and length he predicted it was a two handed sword.

"It's called a Katana," Hicca piped up. "It's a sword used by warriors in Japan called samurai. The way they make their swords is incredible. You won't find a better quality sword in all of the archipelago," she said confidently.

He was impressed by it. "You made this?" he asked as he ran his fingers across the flat of the blade. She nodded in confirmation. The hilt of the sword was blue and gold. It reminded him of Stormfly. Taking a closer look, he saw that the guard of the sword was the symbol of the Hofferson clan. "Wow Hicca! This is amazing!" he said in amazement. "Thanks."

"You're welcome Ash," she said with a proud smile. Ash sheathed the blade and looked her in the eye. They just stared at each other for what seemed like ages. Finally Ash cleared his throat and broke eye contact.

"I got something for you too," he stammered out while he set the blade down on a counter. Hicca cocked her head to the side curiously. She wondered what he had gotten her. Rummaging through his left pocket, he pulled out a small object he held between two fingers. Looking closely at it, she saw that it was a piece of jewelry. A ring to be exact. "I got this from Johan," Ash said taking her left hand. Hicca remained still as he raised her hand and slipped the ring onto her fourth finger. "Wouldn't believe what I had to trade for it," he added jokingly.

Hicca gasped at the beauty of the ring. It was made of some kind of green gemstone. And it was lined with silver. The silver was made expertly to involve a serpentine dragon wrapping around the ring.

"Trader Johan said the gemstone was jade. I thought it would go well with your eyes," he explained. Hicca didn't care. She was holding the

ring up to her face in admiration. It was just so pretty.

"I love it Ash," Hicca whispered before bringing her hand to her chest. She couldn't believe he had given her such an amazing gift. She looked up at him and smiled in appreciation.

Ash was glad to hear she liked it. He could see it in her smile that she was telling the truth. Looking at the ring on her finger, he swore to himself that one day he would put a wedding ring on it. He didn't care how long it would take. He wanted no one else. Hicca was his first, last, and only choice. Reaching into his other pocket he pulled out his other gift and held it up to her face. He saw recognition flash across her face as she eyed the object.

"An Omamori?" Hicca whispered aloud.

"Johan said it was a good luck charm from Japan. I hoped you would like it," he said blushing slightly and rubbing the back on his head.

Hicca reached out and took the medallion from Ash. She smiled down at it in her palm. This was such a thoughtful gift. Hicca always missed Japan, and now it was like he had given her a piece of it. "Thank you Ash," she said sincerely. Glancing closely at the medallion, she saw that it was of a particular kind. It was an en-musubi. A medallion that possessed a blessing for ensuring love and marriage. She didn't think Ash knew that. She decided to not say anything. Looking up to Ash face, she froze when he saw the way he was looking at her.

He was gazing at her with utter adoration. His eyes held boundless affection. It made Hicca's heart flutter. She was trapped by his eyes. Eyes that normally burned with fierceness and determination. But only with her would they shine with something else. She could hear Ash's heart racing as he raised a hand up to caress her face with his knuckles.

"Hicca, I really want to kiss you," he said in a low husky voice that made her knees weak.

Hicca swallowed nervously. He wasn't referring to a kiss on the cheek. That much was clear. Her heart started to beat madly in her chest as the thought of letting him kiss her thrilled and terrified her. She wanted to kiss him too. To feel his lips against hers once again. "What's stopping you?" she whispered.

Ash hesitated for a moment as he took in her answer. Then slowly he bent over slightly. Hicca waited and remained perfectly still as he brushed a strand of her hair out of her face. Then he kissed her on the cheek. Hicca was confused. She was sure he was going for her lips, but then her breath caught in her throat as he kissed her again, this time closer to her mouth. His kisses were gentle as he slowly started to make his way toward her mouth. When he kissed her on the corner of her lips she knew he was really going to do it.

Ash's lips hovered a few inches from Hicca's. He could feel and hear her breath. He was barely breathing as he was about to do what he had been dreaming about for months. Then he closed his eyes and prepared to close the gap. Hicca did the same as she waited for their lips to meet.

"Hicca, you in there?" Gobber called out bursting into the forge.

Both Hicca and Ash jumped in surprise and took a step back. Then they both turned to glare at Gobber for interrupting the moment. Gobber glanced between the pair and sensed their irritation with him. Smiling and chuckling sheepishly he apologized, "Oh, sorry. I see I'm interrupting something. I'm just gonna go now," he said before shuffling out of the room.

They watched him leave before they both released a sigh. Then they looked back into each other's eyes. Suddenly they were feeling the moment again. Ash took a step toward her and grabbed her by the shoulders. Hicca smiled and lifted her head up to him. Then he started to lean in toward her. Hicca closed her eyes and puckered her lips.

"Hicca!" came another interruption.

"UGH, are you kidding me?" Hicca shouted throwing her arms up in exasperation.

"By the gods," Ash said palming his forehead.

A moment later Stoick entered the forge. He was about to speak when he read the atmosphere of the room. "Ohâ€¦umâ€¦sorry you two," he stammered out. "Hicca, I just wanted to tell you that I'll be home later tonight because I have to supervise cleanup," he said looking to his daughter.

"That's fine dad," she replied shortly. She just wanted him to leave.

"Ok, I'll be going then. Carry on," he said before turning around and quickly exiting.

Once again the pair released a sigh. The moment had been interrupted yet again. But they weren't ready to give up just yet.

"Third times the charm?" Hicca asked looking to Ash.

"Sounds good to me," he said stepping forward and reaching his hand behind her and placing them at the small of her back. Then he pulled her close. Hicca was surprised by his bold move but smiled up at him. She liked this position. Him holding her close and her pressing against him. Closing her eyes she started rising on her tip toes and he bent over to meet her. Hicca opened her eyes for a moment to look into his face. And to her horror she saw something a few feet away over his shoulder.

"Dad! Gobber!" Hicca shrieked indignantly. Ash released her and turned to find the chief and Gobber peering at them from the shop window. Both men suddenly straightened out at being caught and mumbled apologies and excuses before leaving.

Ash was screaming profanities in his mind. _Three times. Three frickin times! _Why did the gods suddenly hate him? Why couldn't he just kiss the girl he loved and get on with his life. Maybe he still had a chance. Glancing over to Hicca he cleared his throat, "Soâ€¦|

should weâ€", " he began.

"No," she said quickly with a frown. The moment was gone. Having your father and basically your uncle spy on you was an absolute mood killer.

With a sigh Ash gave up. He would have other chances. "Can I walk you home?" he offered. Hicca turned to him and smiled before nodding. Picking up his new sword he grasped her hand and led her out of the forge. Slowly they walked together up the slope of the village to her house. Both were very disappointed that they didn't get to kiss. Still, this had been one of the best Snoggletog celebrations for the both of them.

Finally they reached her house. Hicca walked up two of the steps and turned to face Ash. She was now at eye level with him she remained on the ground. "Thanks for the gifts Ash," Hicca said sincerely. She loved them both.

"Thank you for the sword. And for spending Snoggletog with me," he added. They smiled at each other. They didn't really want to say goodnight. Then there was still that kiss that neither of them got. With a sigh, Ash looked up at the sky. Hicca looked up too on a whim. The sky was beautiful. The stars were out. Ash snorted in amusement.

"What?" Hicca asked curiously.

"Just remembering something. All these years on Snoggletog I would look up at the stars and think to myself how beautiful they were," he said. Hicca smiled. They certainly were nice. "I remember thinking to myself, 'I wonder if Hicca is looking at these same stars'," he finished with fond remembrance.

Hicca was surprised by his statement. All these years Ash had been thinking about her. Wondering where she was. What she was doing. A sudden rush of affection suddenly welled up inside of her. And she needed to release it. She reached out her hand and placed it on his cheek to get his attention. Ash looked down and before he could do anything, she leaned forward and gave him a quick peck on the lips. Then she took a step back and giggled at Ash's expression.

Ash's eyes widened in surprise at her surprise kiss. But then his mouth formed into a goofy grin as he stared at her, utterly smitten.

"Goodnight Ash," Hicca said with smile. Then she turned and walked inside her house. She gently shut the door behind her and slumped against it. This had been the best Snoggletog ever. She began making her way up the stair as she touched her lips. It had been brief, but it was amazing.

Outside Ash was thinking the same thing. Hicca had given him his true Snoggletog gift. He looked up to the stars and thanked every god he could. He had wished for this and prayed for Hicca to return for years. And through their will or some other divine being's intervention his prayers had been answered.

As he walked home with a smile on his face he was thinking only of one thing.

He couldn't wait to kiss her again.

* * *

><p>There you go everyone. A new chapter.

**I hope this makes BereniceAlpha1 happy since they're like the biggest Hiccstrid fan ever. **

And to my self proclaimed #1 fan EnrichedWhiteBread, you're awesome. I appreciate your continued interest. Really like your Fate story and hope for an update soon

20. Chapter 20

Assassinate Siver

Over the next couple weeks after Snoggletog Hicca and Ash would continue to hold hands almost every time they were together. They had begun to also give each other pecks on the lips. Both were very happy they had taken another small step in their relationship. Finally, four weeks after Snoggletog, the dragons returned with their offspring. Many new baby dragons came with hungry mouths and excited parents who wanted nothing more than to show their newest clutch to their humans. Stormfly had come back with six new Nadder babies. Like every year Ash promised them to children seeking a dragon partner in the future. Others would age and eventually fly away from Berk to establish their own territories or join other nests.

With their dragons back, the riders got to work. Over the course of the next few months they began to attack the secret bases of the Scarred Ones scattered all throughout the archipelago. The Scarred Ones were unable to retaliate as the ice made it almost impossible to travel by sea. So week after week the Scarred Ones were attacked by the riders. They lost many men in an attempt to protect their food stores, armories, and other hiding places. Each time the riders attacked they would attempt to capture some of the men alive so they could discover the location of Siver.

But they were never able to discover his location. Many would poison themselves when they were on the verge of being captured. Those that they were able to interrogate apparently knew nothing of his location. This frustrated the riders and Stoick to no end. Nevertheless they continued their assault on Siver's hideouts to keep the pressure on. They also kept their ears open for his location, hoping that Heath or another tribe would hear anything about his whereabouts.

They would find him. He couldn't hide forever, and when they did, they would make him pay.

* * *

><p>After four months of continued assaults on the Scarred Ones outposts, the ice had finally melted. This meant that the Scarred Ones could once again attack Berk. As a good chief should, Stoick put the village back on high alert. He was ordering more patrols and making sure the guards were scheduled at all hours of the day when he

saw the riders approaching. He walked up to greet them from their return from their mission when he noticed that two of them were missing. His daughter and Ash.<p>

"Afternoon all," he said to them as he approached. The riders immediately stopped their talking and greeted him back respectfully. "How did the mission go?" he asked.

"It went fine chief. Completely caught them by surprise and neutralized them," Fishlegs said piping up.

"Where are Hicca and Ash?" Stoick asked them next.

"Well, Ash got a minor injury while on the mission, so Hicca and him flew off so she could treat his wounds," Ruffnut answered.

As Stoick was about to ask about the extent of the injury a villager called out to him. Turning, he saw a villager approaching with a messenger Terror. Whatever it was carrying, it seemed important as the villager was running at him at full speed. When he reached Stoick, he immediately handed him a scroll. He unfurled it and started going over his documents.

The others watched him curiously as he read the scroll. They wondered what was on it. Then they saw his eyes widen slightly. He turned toward them with a serious expression. "Find Hicca and Ash. Bring them to the great hall immediately," he ordered firmly. The riders nodded and went to get their dragons so they could begin scouting the area for them. The contents of the scroll were serious. Hicca and Ash needed to be informed immediately.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, sitting against a tree near the edge of a cliff and watching the sunset was Ash. Ash was currently having his wounds treated by Hicca. He had gotten sucker punched on their last mission and it had left a light bruise on his cheek. Hicca firmly insisted she take a look at it and offered to treat him. Ash had accepted and his face had a contented smile as he let Hicca tend to his injury. And by 'treat' he meant Hicca kissing him on the cheek fervently while he enjoyed her affection and concern.<p>

"Feeling better?" Hicca asked while she paused her kissing.

"Still hurts a little," Ash said with a grin. Hicca smiled at him before resuming her kissing. Her arms were wrapped around his neck as she peppered his face with gentle pecks. Ash normally wouldn't stand for such babying over an injury he hardly found serious. But what the Hel. If Hicca wanted to make sure he was ok, who was he to stop her?

"How's that?" she asked while pausing once again. She just wanted an excuse to kiss him. With all their attacks on the Scarred Ones, they hadn't had many opportunities to be alone.

"Better, but I still feel a little stinging, here," he said while pointing to his other cheek. "Here," he said while pointing to his chin. "And here," he finished while pointing to his lips.

"Well I got to make sure I do a thorough job," Hicca said playfully.

Then slowly, she placed a firm kiss on his other cheek. Then she trailed kisses along his jawline until she stopped and kissed him on the chin. Then she moved upwards until her lips were hovering a few inches away from Ash's. Quickly, she closed the gap and gave him a peck on the lips before pulling back and smiling at him. Ash smiled back before wrapping his arms around her and pulling her towards him. Hicca let him position her so that she was in between his legs and leaning back against his chest. She released a sigh as she watched the sunset with him.

Ash enjoyed moments like this. Here, holding Hicca in his arms, it made him feel like they were something more than what they were. They still weren't officially a couple just yet. But he had a feeling that would change soon. Ash was getting more and more competent at expressing how he felt about her. Soon, he was going to tell her that he loved her. That he wanted to always hold her like this. Smiling to himself he moved his head to the crook of her neck and started to kiss her. He felt her relax against him and giggle as his stubble tickled her. He loved her so much. He seriously wondered why it was so damn hard for him to just tell her that.

As he continued to kiss her skin another thought occurred to him. Was Hicca going to stay? They hadn't discussed it much since she had agreed to stay at least until they got Siver. But what was going to happen after that? Would she just up and leave? The thought of her just leaving made his heart clench.

"Hey Hicca?" he began. He needed to know. When he got a 'mhm' in acknowledgment he continued, "What do you plan to do after we get Siver?" he asked.

Hicca's eyes widened as she thought about his question. Truth be told, she hadn't really been thinking about it much. She kind of forgot she still wasn't a member of the tribe. The way she walked around and interacted with everybody made it seem like she was. "I don't know," she said blankly.

Ash frowned at this. He was hoping for a clear answer. "Well are you planning on leaving?" he asked. He held his breath while he waited for her response.

"Hm. I don't really want to leave," Hicca admitted. It was the truth. She felt welcome here. She felt like she had a place here with everyone, her father, and Ash. "What do you think I should do?" she asked him.

After releasing a breath at Hicca's answer he swallowed nervously to answer her question. "Well, I think you should stay," he replied nervously.

"Why's that?" she asked.

Ash's face flushed red. Time to man up. He took a deep breath to calm his nerves. "Because everyone wants you to. Our friends, your father, and me," he said sincerely. At his answer Hicca sat up and turned to look at him. She seemed to be searching his face for the truth. "Especially me," Ash added firmly.

Hicca could hear the truth in his words. They were strengthened by the steadiness of his heart. He really wanted her to stay. Yet

despite her desire to stay, she was reluctant and scared. What if things went back to the way they had been when she was a child? What if, sometime in the future, they all turned their backs on her again? She didn't want to be in that place again. Alone, but surrounded by people who she couldn't call out to.

"How do I know that things will be any different this time?" she asked quietly. "How do I know that I won't be left alone again?" She averted her gaze shyly as she waited for his answer. The thought truly scared her. She froze as she felt his hands cup her face gently and lift her gaze back to him. The look in his eyes held warmth and conviction.

"I wouldn't let that happen," he said locking eyes with her so she could see the honesty. "I can never take back all those years Hicca. I can never make up for all the things we did or said to you," he began. "What I did or said to you," he added. He was as guilty as anyone and he knew it. "But I promise you, I'd never let you be alone again," he said resolutely.

Hicca felt warmth flood through her at his answer. She could hear his heart. It was steady. He meant every word. "What if I have a child? What if they're different like I was and they get same treatment I did?"

Ash's eyes blazed with anger and protectiveness. "I'd shove my axe up the ass of anyone who would dare bully that child," Ash said fiercely. Hicca smiled and blushed at his response. She couldn't help but notice a hint of possessiveness in his voice. Almost like he had a good idea who the father of her child was going to be.

Hicca mulled over his answers. It sounded good. Really good. And she believed Ash when he said he wouldn't let her be alone anymore. That was what had her the most afraid. Having a life here, on Berk, with Ash, it felt like a dream come true. Finally Hicca came to a decision. She looked up into Ash's eyes and smiled.

"Ok," she said with a slight nod.

"Ok what?" Ash asked inquisitively.

"I'll stay," she clarified.

Ash searched her face for the truth. When he could find no hint of deceit he pressed for details. "You mean that? You'll stay and rejoin the tribe?" he asked hopefully. He watched as she remained motionless for a while, then to his joy she gave him an affirmative nod. Then his face broke into the widest, happiest smile he'd ever had. He reached his arms out and pulled her into a tight hug. She made a noise of surprise at his action but made no attempt to free herself.

"You have no idea how happy I am to hear that," he whispered to her with sincerity. His heart was soaring. He had done it. He had given her a good reason to stay. Now, years down the road, they could truly be something. There was a real future possible for them. He let her go slightly so he could look into her face. She was blushing and there was a genuine smile on her face. That made him happy. She really wanted to stay on her own accord, he hadn't guilted or forced her decision in any way. His love for her suddenly welled up within

him. He had to release it. It was time to tell her.

"Hicca," Ash began.

"Yes Ash," Hicca said before she wrapped her arms around his neck, leaned in, and began kissing his neck. It made her happy that Ash was happy she was staying. She smiled to herself as Ash swallowed a lump in his throat. Apparently he had forgotten what he was going to ask. That was perfect to Hicca since she didn't feel much like talking. She nipped at Ash's skin, making him shudder in response. Then she resumed her kissing while she wrapped her fingers in his golden hair.

Ash closed his eyes as his breathing became more and more ragged. What had he been about to say to her? He was pretty sure it was important. But the thought was pushed to the back of his mind as Hicca continued to show her affection. It could wait. Wrapping his arms around her, he pulled her into his lap so she was straddling his legs. Then he began to return the favor by nuzzling into her neck. As Ash started to kiss her skin, he heard Hicca moan in bliss. She bit her lip lightly to stop the sounds that were threatening to escape her. A gasp found its way to her lips as Ash nipped her lightly. She shut her eyes against the waves of euphoria washing over her. She felt so much happiness and joy. She felt so wanted and loved. It was almost overwhelming. Only Ash could make her feel this way.

Finally Ash stopped and looked into her eyes. She could see the want and desire in them. But overall she could see his affection. Her gaze drifted from his eyes down to his lips. She wanted to kiss him. To really kiss him. No more of those childish pecks they kept doing. She wanted one full of passion, slow, strong, and firm. She could sense that Ash wanted the same thing. Slowly she closed her eyes and leaned in. Ash saw her making the first move and closed his eyes and leaned forward to meet her. How they had both been wanting this for so long.

"Hicca! Ash!" came the voice of Snotlout from above.

The pair immediately opened their eyes and groaned in annoyance. This was starting to get really old.

"I'm gonna kill that guy. I swear to Odin," Ash growled out.

Hicca silently agreed before getting off Ash and picking up her scarf and wrapping it back around her neck. When she was done, the pair looked up and saw Snotlout and Hookfang hovering above them.

"What is it Snot?" Hicca asked with a frown.

"Chief wants us all in the great hall, like now," Snotlout replied.

The couple exchanged a glance before they called for their dragons who had been dozing off to the side the entire time. Ash as was about to mount Stormfly he felt a hand on his shoulder whip him around. Immediately he saw Hicca rise on her toes and give him a peck on the lips. He smiled down at her while she smiled back. Then she ran and mounted Toothless while he mounted Stormfly. Then the pair joined Snotlout in the sky before heading back to the village.

* * *

><p>Everyone in the room was silent as they processed the contents of the scroll. Hicca was currently rereading the scroll while Ash was also going over it at her side.<p>

_Dear Hooligan Tribe, _

_I, the Raven, wish to inform you that I have discovered a vital piece of information regarding Siver. From a reliable source I have discovered that Siver will be on the island marked on the map I sent along with this scroll this Thor's day. As promised you are the first ones I have informed of this development. I allow you to do what you will with this information. Unfortunately I am unable to make a move on Siver myself. Good luck and happy hunting. _

_P.S. My fondest regards to milady Hicca. Wish you all the best and hold you in my dearest thoughts. _

Ash frowned at the last part. He was going to punch Heath the next time he saw him. Ash then looked up to the chief while Hicca continued to read the scroll and look over the map on the table in front of them.

"So what's the plan chief?" Ash asked.

"We attack. We get to that island and we capture Siver, dead or alive," Stoick said darkly. It was time to end this. Siver had to pay.

"No," Hicca piped in firmly. Everyone turned to look at her in surprise. What did she mean no?

"Who do you mean 'no' Hicca?" Stoick asked confused. "Don't you want to get Siver?" he asked.

Hicca looked up at him to explain. "I meant that I'll do this alone. This isn't going to be an attack. It's going to be an assassination. And that makes me the only one for this job," she explained.

Stoick's eyes widened in surprise.

"Hicca, that's crazy," Ash said at her side.

Hicca turned to look at him with a frown. "I've been trained and have pulled off many assassinations Ash. It's not crazy, I can do this," she insisted.

"We're not going to let you go alone Hicca," Stoick interjected. He respected her confidence but he wouldn't let her do this by herself.

"I can get close enough by myself. I'm an expert of infiltration and escape. Plus we will limit the amount of people we risk by letting me go by myself," she reasoned. "I can end this," she added with conviction.

"No. I'm not letting you go alone Hicca and that's final," Stoick responded sharply. Both father and daughter held each other's gaze.

They were practically glaring at each other, both too stubborn to back down. It was in this moment that Stoick could see a lot of himself in her. Her defiant glare, her refusal to back down. She was his daughter alright.

Finally to his and everyone's surprise, Hicca released a sigh in defeat. "Fine," she grumbled. Stoick was surprised she had relented so easily. But he was too relieved to question it.

"Alright good. I'll start going over an attack strategy," he told her. Then he gave her a pat on the shoulder before dismissing the group.

As the riders were leaving, Hicca walked ahead of them. She looked to be lost in thought and in a sour mood at her father's dismissal of her idea. Ash came up to her side and attempted to console her.

"You ok?" he asked.

She remained silent for a moment before answering. "Yeah, I guess. I still think I should do this alone, but everyone seems against it," she replied slightly bitter.

"Well, you wanna come over to my house for some dinner?" he offered. He wanted to spend some more time with her.

"Nah, I'm just gonna call it a night," she said politely rejecting his offer.

"Oh, alright," Ash said in disappointment. Hicca felt a little bad at seeing his face fall. Taking a step forward she rose up on her tip toes and gave him a kiss on his cheek. That earned a smile that made her happy. With that, they wished each other goodnight and went to their homes.

As she was walking to her house, she was going over her own attack strategy. She was thankful that her years of ninja training made her skilled at deception. No one had detected her lie when she agreed to go along with her father's plan.

She knew she was right about this. She knew she could get the job done without risking her friends and anyone else. She could kill Siver. She would prove to everyone who was doubting her skills at eliminating a target.

The only thing she wasn't looking forward to was her father's anger. Not to mention Ash's. They were going to be absolutely mad at her. But it was for the best.

* * *

><p>It was several days after receiving the message of Siver's whereabouts. All older academy members were assembled and briefed about the mission. Additionally many villagers competent in dragon riding were gathered and assigned. Overall 50 riders had been assembled. Everyone else would be left to defend Berk. Ash was assigned to lead the mission. It was early morning and Ash was going to get Hicca. Over the past several days Hicca had kept mostly to herself. She had told Ash it was all mental preparation and meditation and he didn't question her. He couldn't help but wonder if

she had told her father that she wanted to rejoin the tribe yet. He had been too busy to ask her about it.<p>

When he reached her house he knocked and was let in by Stoick. When he questioned her about her whereabouts he said she was probably still sleeping in her room. Ash furrowed his eyebrows at this. Hicca never slept in this late. She and Toothless were natural early birds. Not to mention Hicca sleeping in on the day of the mission seemed absurd. With a slightly hurried pace he walked up the stairs to her room. When he reached her door he knocked and called out to her. Listening, he could hear no movement from within. With another knock he let himself in. His breath caught in throat at what he saw.

Nothing. The room was completely empty. Looking at the bed he saw that it didn't seem like anyone had slept on it last night. Quickly he bounded down the stairs and ran to the chief. He asked when the last time he'd seen Hicca was. He told him that he'd seen her some time yesterday evening, she said she was going to do a bit of last minute training at the cove. Ash quickly burst out of the house before whistling for Stormfly. She quickly flew to his side and crouched down in front of him. He mounted up before signaling her to go and steering them toward the cove.

When they landed in the cove a few minutes later his stomach dropped to his feet as he saw no sign that anyone had been there recently. With a silent curse he directed Stormfly back to the village. When he landed he immediately called out for the chief. Stoick burst from his home and ran up to Ash. When he noticed his panicked expression he became worried.

"Ash, what's wrong lad?" he asked gruffly.

"I can't find Hicca chief, she's not at the cove," he blurted out.

Stoick's eyes widened for a second before he shouted at the villagers who were wandering the village. "Has any one seen Hicca?" he bellowed out to the villagers. The villagers all shook their heads. Stoick's heart raced as he was becoming more and more worried. Immediately his mind went to the worst case scenario. Turning to look back at Ash, he swallowed a lump in his throat before finding his voice and asking him what he was fearing, "Youâ€|you don't think sheâ€", "

"I think so chief. I thought she gave up a little too easily yesterday. She's gone to try and assassinate Siver by herself," Ash said cutting him off and confirming the chief's fears.

Stoick started muttering curses under his breath at his child's recklessness. "Ash, this has officially become a rescue and retrieval mission. Bring Hicca back at all costs," he ordered firmly.

Ash nodded in confirmation before mounting Stormfly and heading toward the academy. He couldn't believe that Hicca would be so foolish. Why would she go off by herself? He was so furious with her right now. He wanted to strangle her after they rescued her.

At that moment the only thing Ash cared about was getting her back.

Hicca and Toothless touched down at the rear of the island where Siver was supposed to be. It was a few hours passed midday and she decided that she needed to sneak into the village on foot to gather some Intel. Unlike most assassination missions, she didn't know anything about the layout of target's compound. With the sun up it also meant she couldn't approach on Toothless as she would be spotted. Checking her gear and weapons she then strapped her samurai bow to her back. Reaching into her back pouch she grabbed a familiar vile. Her vial of Dragon Whiff. She always kept some on her so that if she needed to she could splash some on herself and alert Toothless that she needed a pickup.

Placing it back into her pouch she heard a soft warble behind her. She turned around and looked into the concerned eyes of her companion. He was obviously concerned about them leaving without informing her father and Ash. "I know hun'. But we can do this. We've done this plenty of times before," she said to reassure him. Hicca also felt bad about leaving without informing Ash and her father. They were probably furious at her. She figured that they probably knew she was gone by now. She had to complete the mission before they got here. Unfortunately the letter from Heath didn't inform them of when Siver would be on the island. He could have arrived hours ago or be en route at that moment.

She extended her palm out towards Toothless. Toothless eyed her hand for a moment. Then he stepped forward and pressed his snout against her palm and closed his eyes. Both of them felt a familiar sense of calm wash over them at their familiar gesture of trust. They could sense their bond, their trust in each other, and their shared strength. On their own they were powerful, together they were, invincible, unbreakable, unbeatable. This is why she had become strong. To protect those who mattered to her. Like Toothless, but now it included her father, the village, and Ash.

Toothless opened his eyes and looked up into hers. He held her gaze as he waited for her to give him directions. "When the sun goes down get into the sky and circle the island. Attack if you hear me give the signal. Come get me when you smell the dragon whiff," she said firmly. He gave a growl and a nod in confirmation. She smiled at him and scratched him under the chin, earning a happy purr. Then she lowered her head to touch his snout. Then she gave him a kiss on his nose. "I'll be fine hun'," she added.

With that, she rose and pulled up her mask. With a last look at Toothless she made her way toward the center of the island. That was where she had seen some people when she circled the island from the clouds before landing.

* * *

><p>Hicca was lying flat on her stomach on a building while surveying the Scarred Ones base of operation. They had established a small village like settlement. From what she had observed there were several building set aside for living quarters, a dining hall, warehouses, one for storing food, one for storing weapons, and a forge. From what she could also make out they also mined for iron ore here. Hicca had been moving over the roofs of buildings as she tried to determine where Siver was. Listening in, she found out he hadn't arrived yet.<p>

Surveying the village she spotted a large building at the top slope of the village. The position of it made it seem like it was specifically for someone of high authority and status. Like a chieftain. Getting up she leapt to another building and started heading towards it. She made sure to stay low and out of sight of the Scarred Ones patrolling the streets.

After a few moments she was perched on top of the house and settled down to wait for its inhabitant to arrive.

* * *

><p>A few hours later as the sun was beginning to set, Hicca heard a commotion coming from the village. Standing up from her meditative position she made her way to the edge of the house and pulled out her spyglass. She could see many of the Scarred Ones gathering around a figure. Hicca surmised that this must have been Siver. He had finally arrived. From her spyglass she couldn't make out any features other than the fact that he was a large man. About as big as her father.<p>

Hicca watched him for a little over an hour as he went to every building, likely to get status updates. Finally after he had gone to every building, he began approaching the house she was perched on. Hicca smiled to herself as she realized she had guessed right. This was his own personal quarters. Hicca put away her spyglass as he got closer and closer to the house. She watched and waited as he finally came to the door and entered.

Moving away from the edge of the roof, Hicca focused on her hearing and tried her best to follow Siver's movements. She could hear him moving through the house. She heard heavy footsteps on the wooden floors, the squeaking of the floorboards with each step, then the pounding of his footsteps as he started up the stairs. Hicca followed along his path as he finally made his way to a corner of the house. She walked to the edge of the roof as she heard him make his way over. Peeking over the side she saw him open the windows and remain there as he looked outside.

He didn't notice her as his gaze remained trained on his people's settlement. Hicca decided it was time to act. Taking a few steps back she cracked her neck and rolled her shoulders. Then she took a breath before dashing toward the edge of the roof. With a leap and a twist of her body she grabbed onto the edge of the roof and swung herself through the window. Driving the heels of her boots right into the man's face on her way in and making him stumble back. Landing in a crouch she rose up and prepared herself for a counter attack.

The man recovered quickly from his surprise attack and advanced on her. The man threw a right cross aimed at her face. Quickly she ducked under his arm and twisted her body the elbow of her right arm into the man's face, hitting him square on the nose. The man cried out in pain and brought his hands up to his nose. Hicca advanced and spun on her left heel, delivering a high kick across the man's face. The man stumbled from the blow and Hicca took a small jump back. Then she immediately grabbed her bow from off her back and pulled an arrow from her quiver. She notched the arrow, pulled back on the drawstring, and aimed it at the man.

"Don't move," she said dangerously.

The man obeyed and looked at her. Seeing her bow trained on him he raised his arms up to his sides. Hicca looked the man over now that she had the opportunity. Like she had seen before, he was a large man. As tall and as broad as her own father. He had brown greasy hair that ran down to his shoulders. He had a long beard with gray hairs that ran down to his stomach and was tied into intricate braids. He had mud brown eyes and his face was riddled with scars. He had a large one running down the left side of his face, running from his cheekbone to his chin. There was also a scar across the bridge of his nose and on his cheeks. Then there was a small scar at the corner of his right eye.

He wore a crimson red tunic with spiked metal shoulder plates and a black bearskin cape. On his arms were spiked arm cuffs and at his waist was a belt with the insignia of the Scarred Ones. A skull with three scars on it. She could make out a battle axe on his back and a hatchet at his waist.

"I can see why they call you Siver the Scarred," Hicca said mockingly.

The man only scowled at her. "And who are you lass?" he asked.

"The name is Hicca," she replied shortly. "Hicca. Horrendous. Haddock," she stated slowly. She saw the man process her name before she saw the realization strike him.

"So you're Stoick's daughter then," he stated with a sneer. "Can't say I see much of a resemblance," he added.

"Like I haven't heard that before," she retorted dryly.

"I heard you were dead," he said raising an eyebrow curiously.

"So did I," she said blankly.

They remained silent as they held each other's gaze. She saw his fingers twitch and she aimed her arrow at his heart and pulled back on the drawstring lightly.

"Think you can draw your weapon and reach me before I put an arrow in your chest? I can hit a target from a much greater distance from here. I see you make a move for your weapons I'll kill you. You call for help, I'll kill you," she warned lowly.

The man chuckled in amusement. "I take that back. I can see the resemblance now. Those eyes of yours," he said pointing at her face. "The look your giving me is the same one Stoick gave me all those years ago. The eyes of a killer. Cool. Calm. Not a flicker of doubt or hesitation," he said while he rubbed a finger across the scar on his cheek. Hicca assumed it was one her father had given him and smiled proudly at his comparison to her.

"So have you come to kill me then lass?"

"Yes," Hicca said with resolve. "But first I wanna hear why our families have a blood feud."

"And will you let me live if I tell you?" he inquired.

"No. You're going to die no matter what. I'm just giving you a few more moments of precious life," she said icily.

Siver chuckled again. "Oh you're quite something lass. You'd make an excellent wife for any Viking man," he said wagging his eyebrows.

Oh Barf! Hicca thought in her mind. "Answer the question or I'll kill you right now," she growled at him.

"Very well. The feud between our families goes way back. To the times of our grandfathers," he began. "Actually it was long before that," he amended. "My family, the Hake clan, have always been some of the fiercest Vikings in the archipelago. No one dared stand against us. No one but you damned Haddocks," he said bitterly.

"But before our grandfathers it was only small territorial disputes. Nothing major to start the feud. Then my grandfather rallied some of the strongest clans in the archipelago. Together they were going to conquer it all," he said with a proud smile. Then his face turned dark as he glared at Hicca. "But you Haddocks, you rallied enough forces to match us. The Jorgensons, the Hofferons, Ingermans, Thorstons, they all stood beside you and met us in battle. And then your patriarch killed ours. His son swore revenge on you Haddocks. And that's how our blood feud started," he finished coldly.

Hicca listened intently and her mind perked at hearing the clans named of her friends. "And you bloody Haddocks just refused to die. My father was killed by you grandfather. Then your father tried to kill me. And now I see that his bloodline has continued," he said with a snarl. Hicca saw his fists ball at his sides as he shook with fury. Hicca pulled back on her drawstring a little more to remind him that she still had the advantage here. It worked as he stepped back and kept his arm up.

"Hmmm," Hicca muttered thoughtfully. "I was worried for a second there that my family was in the wrong. That we owed you some kind of reparations. But hearing your story, I don't feel guilty at all about kill you. You're all psychopaths," she said with venom.

She locked eyes with him as she prepared to end this. "Goodbye Siver," she said as she leveled her bow at his heart. It was time to kill this bastard. This man who had caused so much pain others. Who was intent on killing her and her father.

Just as she was about to loose the arrow and end the man's life a noise cut through the tense atmosphere. It was the roar of a dragon. Followed by the shouts and alarmed cries of men. Hicca took her eyes off Siver for a moment in surprise and shifted her glance towards the village. Siver saw her moment of distraction and decide to capitalize on it. He quickly drew his hatchet from his belt and swung at her. Hicca leapt back and fired her arrow. But she missed and struck him in his shoulder armor, the arrow bounced off with a clang and did nothing. Then Siver hurled his hatchet at her. Hicca leapt over it and prepared to draw another arrow. But Siver reacted faster and ran to the room's window and leapt out.

Hicca cursed for letting herself be distracted. If her sister had seen that she would have received such a pinch. She ran to the window

and saw Siver retreating into the village. Hicca immediately jumped out of the window and dashed after him. All around her the Scarred Ones were running around and trying to defend and shoot at the dragons that were circling from above. The sun had completely set and she could barely make them out from the giant torches around the village. The riders were making passes over the village and setting blinds ablaze and swooping down to hurl a spear at the men.

Hicca kept up her pace and pulled out another arrow. Then she notched it and aimed it at Siver before firing. The arrow flew true but its path was interrupted by a passing Scarred One. Hitting him on the ribs and piercing his lungs he gave a cry of pain. Hicca ignored the man and continued after Siver. As she drew and notched another arrow a Scarred One charged her from her right. Hicca quickly shifted her aim from Siver to the charging Viking and fired her arrow. The arrow flew at him and pierced his chest.

A battle cry from behind her drew her attention next and she drew and notch another arrow before whirling around and firing it. The arrow hit a charging Viking in the neck, halting his charge and killing him. Hicca loved her samurai bow. The sheer power of it was amazing.

To Hicca annoyance more of the Scarred One had taken notice of her and started charging her. Hicca had no choice but to defend herself and kept firing arrow after arrow at the charging waves of Scarred Ones. After downing one man by shooting him in the gut Hicca reached for her quiver and grabbed at empty air. She had used up all her arrows. Looking around she saw that she had lost sight of Siver. He had gotten away from her. She had failed in her assassination. Strapping the bow onto her back, Hicca drew her Ninjato as a group of Scarred One surrounded her. They enclosed her in a circle with their weapons at the ready while Hicca was crouched low in a battle stance and waiting for them to make the first move.

Just as one of them was about to make a move on her a volley of spike landed at his feet, making him jump back in surprise. Everyone's gaze suddenly shifted to the sky as Hicca saw a familiar group of dragons and riders approaching. The men all took a step back as a Zippleback flew in a circle around them while one head expelled the flammable gas. As a complete circle of gas was formed the other head ignited it, surround Hicca in a burning ring on fire.

Then in a beat of wing she was snatched up from the ground. Looking up she saw she was being held by the arms in the talons of a familiar Deadly Nadder. The dragon carried her up and away from the men as they all watched slack jawed and other riders kept attacking. A familiar roar caught Hicca's attention. Glancing down, she saw the black shape of her companion flying below her. Freeing herself from the Nadder's grip she spread her legs and let herself fall into the saddle of her companion.

Reestablishing control of the tailfin she directed Toothless up and hovered in the air. She looked around as her friends surrounded her and hovered around her in a circle. In front of her was Ash, who was glaring angrily at her.

"Snotlout, sound the horn. We got her," Ash called out. At his command Snotlout produced a Viking war horn and blew it. All the other riders heard it and they directed their dragons up and away

from the Scarred Ones' settlement.

"We're going back to Berk. Now," Ash said to her harshly. Hicca narrowed her eyes at him. He had the nerve to command her. Who did he think he was? But, having lost track of Siver and the element of surprise lost, retreat was probably the best option.

She steered Toothless away from the island and back towards Berk. Ash pulled up beside her and continued his angry glare.

"How could you do something so damn stupid", " Ash began before Hicca cut him off.

"Save it Ash. You wanna argue about this, save it for when we get to Berk," she hissed at him.

Ash continued his glaring before he tore his eyes away and stared straight ahead. They were gonna talk about this. That was for sure.

The others could feel the tension between the couple and remained silent. They could feel a fight in the making. It was gonna be a big one.

* * *

><p>Sorry bout the late update evryone. Gots a job now and it cuts into my writing time. Hope everypne likes this chapter. Ash and Hicca are gonna have a big fight in the next chapter. Feel free to review and comment.

21. Chapter 21

Oh wow is my face red. Sorry about the confusion everyone. I fat fingered the submission of the new chapter. Here is the real chapter 21

* * *

><p>Words and Actions

It was early morning and Stoick was attending to his chiefly duties. But all the while his mind was on his daughter. He was worried about her safety. He was also furious that she would do something so reckless. Even worse is that she had the audacity to lie to his face about it. He was going to give her a talking to when she got back. He didn't care if she was an adult, she was his child dammit. He prayed that Ash and his friends would bring her back safely. Gods know he didn't want to lose her again.

Checking the horizon, he squinted against the sun as he made out dots in the distance. The riders were returning. The other villagers noticed them too and healers and family members stood at the ready to check on their loved ones. After a few minutes the dragons and their riders started landing in the village. Some settling on houses and other in the streets. Stoick frantically scanned the throng of dragons for a familiar black one.

Finally he spotted his daughter's Night Fury flying alongside a

familiar blue and yellow Nadder. He was about to call out to them when he noticed they weren't coming in for a landing. Instead the dragons soared passed the village and towards the center of the island. He furrowed his brows in confusion and wondered why they weren't landing.

"Chief!" came a shout from above.

Stoick turned in the direction of the shout and saw the young dragon riders coming in for a landing. "Fishlegs," he shouted back as he approached. "Where are Ash and Hicca going? Is everyone alright?" he asked worried.

"Everyone is fine chief. No one was injured and we got Hicca back safely," Fishlegs stated. Then he cast his gaze down. He started to fiddle with his hands nervously. "Butâ€|during the attackâ€|we kind of lost track of Siver. He got away and we lost the element of surprise so we retreated back to Berk when we got Hicca," he muttered quietly.

Stoick cursed at knowing Siver was still alive out there. But he counted his blessings that at least they had gotten is daughter back. "And Ash and Hicca?" he asked again.

The others exchanged glances and remained silent. "We think they're going to have a little talk about Hicca's actions," Fishlegs said nervously. "But I'm sure they'll have a calm and reasonable discussion," he added hopefully.

* * *

><p>"WHAT IN THE NAME OF ODIN WERE YOU THINKING HICCA?!" Ash roared. He was furious. He loomed over her as her back was to a tree. The silence between them on the ride back to Berk had been tense and he was damn sure going to shout at her now. After sailing over the village they landed in the forest and immediately marched up to each other seething. Their dragons could sense the animosity between them and snuck away to let them have at it.<p>

"I WAS THINKING THAT I COULD TAKE SIVER OUT ALONE WITHOUT RISKING ANYONE ELSE'S LIVES ASH!" Hicca shouted back indignantly.

They glared at each other. They were both extremely angry at one another. Ash was angry at Hicca because of her violation of trust and blatant lie to her friends, father, and him. Hicca was angry that Siver had gotten away only because Ash and the riders had shown up.

"And you know what? I could have. I had Siver right where I wanted him. Then you guys showed up and ruined everything," she spat at him.

"We could have gotten him together if you had followed the plan," Ash shot back. "If you had just worked with us instead of going off on your own, Siver would be ours," he said angrily.

"I didn't need your help," Hicca replied acidly.

"Oh so what? We're all just dumb bumbling Vikings who you can't count on. Is that it? Are we too clumsy and idiotic for your 'ninja way'?"

he asked harshly.

"I didn't say that Ash! Don't put words in my mouth," she hissed.

They were still seething at each other. Their nostrils were flared and their shoulders were tense. They glared into each other's eyes. Neither willing to back down.

"You know what? I don't have to stand here and listen to you lecture me," Hicca muttered tearing her eyes away. She started to make her way around Ash but was stopped when he raised his arm up and halted her path. "Get out of my way Ash," Hicca said lowly.

"No," he said firmly. "We're having this out Hicca. You're gonna listen to what I have to say."

"No, actually I'm not," she said glaring up at him defiantly. She ducked under his outstretched arm and was about to walk away when Ash suddenly grabbed her. He firmly gripped her upper arm before pulling her back against the tree. She looked up at him icily and glared daggers at him.

"You're not going anywhere," he said lowly.

Hicca's fist clenched at her sides. How dare he put his hands on her. If it were anyone else she would have broken his arm. "Don't you ever grab me like that! And I don't have to listen to this because you're not my father and you're not my boyfriend," the words died on her lips as she realized what she had been about to say.

Unfortunately for her Ash heard and understood perfectly. He narrowed his eyes at her. "Oh, so that's it?" he asked while he took a step back from her. "I'm not your boyfriend so I can't tell you what I feel?" he asked coldly. He turned his back on her and crossed his arms over his chest. "So what we have means nothing?"

Hicca's anger had dissipated and was now replaced with shame and guilt. She could hear the hurt in Ash's voice. She had messed up this time. "No. Of course not Ash. I was just angry. What we have is very precious to me," she said sincerely. Ash didn't turn around or acknowledge her words. She wrapped her arms around him and pressed her forehead between his shoulder blades. "But you don't have to worry about me," she muttered quietly.

"Worry?" she heard Ash mutter. Then he shook her off and whirled around to face her. She couldn't read his emotions at the moment and it actually frightened her a little. Then Ash advanced on her. Hicca took several involuntary steps back until she was pressed against the tree. "You're just not getting it Hicca. I wasn't worried," Ash shouted at her. Her eyes were wide with uncertainty. She didn't understand what he was getting at. "I was terrified," he finally revealed.

Hicca was shocked by Ash's blatant admission of fear. Ash's moniker was Fearless Ash Hofferson after all. She was at a complete loss of words.

Ash suddenly gripped her by her shoulders. "What would I have done if I'd lost you Hicca?" he asked her. She could see his eyes were full

of pain as he was obviously imagining it. "Do you have any idea what that would do to me? Or our friends? Did you even stop to think about what it would do to your father?" he asked pressing his argument. Hicca's resolve was weakening with his every word. Her actions were now starting to sink in. "You may not care about us, but we sure as Hell care about you," he said to further drive his point home.

Hicca still couldn't find her voice.

"What are you still trying to prove Hicca?" he asked her. "I get it ok. You're not weak. You're as strong as any of us," he said as he cupped her and raised it to look into her eyes. Hicca was trapped by his gaze. She processed Ash's words and it finally struck her.

Ash was right. Her actions had been selfish and reckless. Hicca thought she had gotten over her past. But there was still that desire to prove herself that drove her to go after Siver alone. To show people she wasn't weak. Ash and her father hadn't doubted her abilities. They were just trying to protect her.

Hicca dropped her gaze in shame. She felt terrible now. She had worried and lied to her father and her friends. She had put herself and others in danger by her selfishness and pride. And she had hurt Ash. This wasn't the kind of person she wanted to be.

Ash lowered his hands from her face but then grabbed her right hand. He then slowly raised her hand before pressing her palm against his chest. Right over his heart. Hicca looked up at him.

"You don't know what you do to me Hicca," he whispered to her. He took a shaky breath. "If something had happened to you," Ash's voice cracked and he didn't have the strength to finish his statement. He didn't know what it would do to him. And he never wanted to find out.

Hicca realized something in that moment. And it struck her like a punch to the stomach. All this time she figured that Ash just really liked her. She knew he felt something genuine for her. She knew his feeling for her were strong and honest. But she never figured that they were this strong.

Ash didn't just like her. He loved her.

Hicca's heart fluttered as the realization set in. She could feel her heart hammering madly in her chest. She could feel Ash's heart beating in sync through her hand. Now she felt even worse. She had hurt the man she loved most dearly. And she hadn't even known he loved her back.

In Ash's eyes she could still see the anger. But now she could also see the love and the fierce desire to protect her. But she could also detect a hint of something else. Lust. He wanted her. And he wanted her now.

Hicca held his gaze as she unwrapped the scarf around her neck. Then she let it fall to the floor.

"Hicca," Ash said lowly. Hearing him say her name made her knees weak. She wanted him too.

"You want it? Take it," she said, her voice coming out as a husky demand.

That was all the motivation Ash needed. He immediately stepped forward and embraced her. Pulling her close he immediately went for her neck. He'd almost lost her. He needed to touch her, to hold her. Even if it was just to reassure his mind that she was really here and safe.

Hicca's eyes were closed as Ash kissed her. She reached up and pulled him closer. Every kiss he planted against her flesh sent a jolt of pleasure through her body. She loved him so much. And now she knew he loved her back. The knowledge combined with his physical affection had her head swimming. Her whole body flooded with warmth.

After kissing her for a few moments, Ash deemed that this kind of contact wasn't good enough. With a growl of arousal he hoisted her up and pressed her against the tree. Then he took her legs and wrapped them around his waist. Hicca's gasp of surprise was cut short when he immediately brought his lips over hers in a fierce kiss. Licking her lower lip, she opened her mouth and allowed him to slip his tongue inside.

Hicca normally liked setting the pace whenever she and Ash were intimate. But this time she let him do as he pleased. She let him be the hot blooded Viking man that he was. And as she let him explore her mouth she loved every moment of it. She rubbed her tongue against his and was content on letting him dominate. She moaned into the kiss and nibbled on his lower lip.

Pulling back panting and less hungry Ash went to nibble on her ear lobe. Hicca gasped and released a whimper, already missing his lips on hers. "You're my girlfriend," Ash said as a statement of fact.

Hicca nodded frantically. "Ok," she breathed out.

"Don't ever do that again," he ordered firmly.

Hicca nodded again. "I won't," she promised after a gasp. Ash could tell her she was a dragon right now and she'd agree. She just wanted to focus all her attention on them being together.

Ash moved from her earlobe to her neck and began licking the pulse point on her neck. She released a satisfying gasp and her body trembled at his licks. He loved her so much. And now he finally had her. Pulling back he pressed his forehead against hers and looked into her eyes. They were beautiful like always. Like emeralds. He wanted to gaze into them forever.

"Hicca," he breathed out. "I love you," he began but Hicca placed a finger to his lips and silenced him.

"No more words," she whispered to him. "Just show me."

Ash obliged her as he claimed her lips once again. He didn't mind that he was once again interrupted from telling her he loved her. Not at this moment. Right now he just wanted to show her how much he loved her.

Words just got in the way anyway.

* * *

><p>New chapter. hope everyone likes it. I thought they could use a little passion. And now Hicca knows Ash loves her.

22. Chapter 22

****Sacrifice****

After their make out session Ash escorted Hicca back into the village to face her father. Needless to say, he was very angry with her. His version of chewing her out was a lot like Ash's, only it involved a lot more yelling. But Hicca simply let him yell at her. She kept her head down, nodded, and apologized for what she'd done. After he had finally finished his shouting he grounded her. Forbidding her for flying for an entire week. And while she had absolutely no obligation to abide by the terms of her punishment, she accepted it. Finally calm Stoick pulled her into his arms, glad to have her back safe and sound.

Afterwards Hicca apologized to all the riders for her actions, which they accepted. On the sour note Siver had gotten away. But they were assured that he would have to come out of hiding again sometime. And when he did Hicca would stick to the plan and they would get him.

Over the week of her punishment everyone was surprised to see Hicca seemed to always have a smile on her face. A stark contrast to the unhappy and grumpy Toothless who didn't want to go anywhere without his rider. Her face it seemed was permanently stuck in that position. No one was sure but they could sense that Ash had something to do with it. Every time one of her friends would ask her about why she seemed to happy she would blush a deep scarlet, release a delighted squeal, and then scoot closer to the object of her affection. It was starting to weird people out.

Ruffnut decided to finally find out what was up during their shuriken practice. The girls were in the academy with Ruffnut taking aim at three painted barrels in front of her. The girl took steady breaths and concentrated before quickly pulling her shuriken from her pouch and hurling it at the targets. Ruffnut had improved greatly with her new weapon, resulting in all her shuriken hitting the bull's eye.

With a satisfied smile, she turned to look at her teacher and to her annoyance she was staring off into space with a dazed grin. "Ok seriously, what's up with you?" she asked in annoyance.

Hicca snapped from her stupor and flushed slightly. "I-I don't know what you mean," she stammered out.

"You've had that goofy smile on your face for like a week now. What's up?" she asked again. She watched as Hicca remained silent for a moment. Then tinge of red started to form on her cheeks. Ruffnut could tell she was thinking about something. Or maybeâ€¦someone? "Does it have to do with you and Ash?" At her question Hicca's face

turned a deeper shade of red before she let out a giddy squeal. Then she brought her hands to cover her face. Behind her hands Ruffnut could make out Hicca nodding.

"Yes," she muttered quietly.

Well now Ruffnut just had to know. This was some of the 'girl stuff' she'd wanted someone her own age to talk about with. "What happened?"

Hicca squealed again behind her hands and turned away shyly. "He loves me," Hicca murmured behind her hands.

"Whoa! So he finally said that?" Ruffnut asked in surprise. That fact that Ash loved Hicca wasn't a surprise at all to Ruffnut. Or the entire village for that matter. She was just surprised that he finally manned up and said it.

"Well no," Hicca muttered.

Or not, Ruffnut thought to herself. Why wouldn't Ash just grow a pair and tell her already. "Figures," she said with a snort. "Alright, so tell me more." At her request Hicca told her all the details. Ruffnut listened to the girl excitedly recount her argument turned make out session with enthusiasm. She smiled to herself. This is what friends did together. Even if Hicca and Ruffnut wouldn't say it to each other, they were already friends.

* * *

><p>Ash and Hicca were at their usual spot on the cliff overlooking the ocean. Stormfly sunbathed nearby, having flown both Ash and Hicca here since she wasn't allowed to fly on Toothless. Together the pair stared off into the horizon.<p>

"So I was thinking we could go a picnic tomorrow," Ash told the girl leaning against his chest. She 'hmmmed' in acknowledgment but didn't say anything. "Then we could have a night flight since your punishment ends tomorrow," he suggested. She 'hmmmed' once again.

He was starting to think she wasn't paying all that much attention. With a smile he leaned down to whisper into her ear. "Hicca, are you listening to a word I'm saying?" he asked before blowing gently into her ear. She gave satisfying shudder before sighing.

"Sorry just thinking," she said.

Ash shifted her around so he could look into her face. "About what?" he asked curiously.

His staring was making Hicca blush like mad. She could feel the heat rising in her cheeks and brought her hands up to hide her cheeks before looking away shyly. "Don't stare at me Ash. I don't know what kind of face I'm making," she mumbled quietly.

Ash thought it was adorable. She had been doing that all week. It was strange to see her suddenly get shy around him. But he liked knowing he had that kind of effect on her. With a mischievous smile he grabbed her wrists gently before prying them away from her face. Hicca looked up at him with eyes wide in surprise. Ash gave her his

most charming smile and held her gaze. "And why wouldn't I want to stare at the most beautiful and amazing girl in all of the archipelago?" To his satisfaction she turned a beet red before pulling her hands free and slapping them over her face.

"Ash!" she squealed while turning away from him. His compliment was just so sweet. She was just too happy. She'd never been this happy in her life. Honestly her face was sore from her week of constantly smiling. And Toothless had started looking at her like she was crazy. But she couldn't help it. She had finally gotten the thing she'd dreamed of since she was a little girl. The thing she was sure that she as the 'worst Viking Berk had ever seen' would never in a million years obtain.

Ash's love.

He loved her even if he hadn't said it.

Deciding to stop embarrassing her he changed the subject. "So I couldn't help but notice you haven't told your dad you want to rejoin the tribe yet?" he said casually.

Hicca flinched at remembering that. "I couldn't help but notice you haven't told me you love me yet," she retorted. It was Ash's turn to blush in embarrassment.

"Well Iâ€|ahâ€|umm. The thing is thatâ€|," Ash began rambling. He stopped in surprise as Hicca wrapped her arms around his neck. She sat in his lap and pressed herself close to him. Then she leaned to whisper into his ear.

"Tell me you love me Ash," she pleaded quietly.

Ash gulped nervously. He had come so close to saying it on his own, but for her to request for him to say it on the spot had him caught off guard. "If you already know, why do I have to tell you?" he asked finding his voice.

Hicca clutched him a little tighter. "Because I want to hear you say it. I wanna hear those words," she whispered to him. She could hear his heart beating rapidly in his chest. She knew she might be pushing him a little hard, but she wanted so desperately to hear him say it. Those words she had wished to hear from him ever since she was a child.

At his hesitation, she offered some incentive. "Say it and we'll go see my father right now. I'll tell him I want to rejoin the tribe."

Ash was still hesitant. Her offer was certainly tempting. He had been wanting her to rejoin the tribe for months now. And when she said she would he was so happy.

Steeling himself, he cleared his throat. Then he wrapped is arms around her. "Iâ€|," he began before his mouth suddenly went dry. He coughed before trying again. "I...", once again he stopped. He couldn't get why this was such an arduous task. It was just three words he had to say. He'd done much harder things in his life.

Suddenly Hicca pulled back and moved her face close to his. Her lips were a mere few inches away. "Please Ash," she breathed out.

Ash swallowed nervously. "Hiccaâ€¦I," he paused to take a breath. Her lips so close to his weren't helping his nerves. His desire to kiss her was very distracting too. "Hiccaâ€¦Iâ€¦loveâ€¦," he paused once again. This was it. No turning back. "I love yâ€¦," Ash was saying before something cut him off.

It was the village horn signaling an enemy attack. The pair immediately pulled back and leapt to their feet. They exchanged a glance before darting over to Stormfly. This was more important than a confession right now. It was going to have to wait till later. Ash mounted first before extending a hand to Hicca. She grabbed it before being hoisted up behind him. She wrapped her arms around him tightly and nodded. He nodded back before giving Stormfly the signal to fly.

She obliged. With a running start she leap into the air and flapped her wings to gain altitude. Once at a steady height Ash steered her toward the village. They saw a ship in the distance, and surveying the dock they could make out a group of villagers. In front of the crowd was Stoick. Descending, Ash landed Stormfly near the back of the group before they both leapt off and pushed their way through the crowd.

"Dad!" Hicca called out. He turned to face her. "What's going on?" she asked. She could see his face formed into a scowl and there was a spyglass in his right hand.

"It's him," Stoick said darkly.

Hicca didn't have to ask who he was referring to. His tone of voice said it all. With that she stood at her father's side as she waited for the Scarred One ship to pull into port. As it got nearer she could make out Siver at the helm. She clenched her fists at her sides angrily.

The ship was flying the white flag of surrender. She wondered what Siver was paying at. They'd just have to wait and see.

* * *

><p>After about ten minutes of waiting Siver's ship pulled into port. Then the man stepped off his ship. He was wearing the same thing Hicca had seen him in last time, save he had a helmet with four great horns. Two on the sides and two at the back.<p>

As he approached, some of his men followed behind. She couldn't make out any weapons on them. Stoick's body language was tense. He wanted to pummel the man. But he was flying the white flag so he had to at least hear him out.

"Stoick the Vast," Siver greeted with a sneer.

"Siver. You got a lot of nerve setting foot on my island," Stoick growled angrily.

"I've come in peace Stoick," Siver replied.

"Peace?!" Stoick roared in outrage. "After what you've done you have the audacity to claim you come in peace! Give me a reason I shouldn't kill you right now?" Stoick shouted.

Siver didn't even flinch at Stoick's outburst. He simply stepped forward. "Because if you do its war Stoick. And you have no idea how large my forces are or where we are," he answered lowly.

Stoick narrowed his eyes at him. "You're bluffing. If you're forces are as big as you say why you haven't attacked with them already?" he challenged.

"Simple. Know thy enemy. I've been testing you. Besides, why bother with something when you can have others do it for you," he said with an evil smirk. Obviously referring to sending the other tribes after Berk. "As chief, isn't your responsibility to look at all alternatives Stoick? For the sake of your people, won't you hear me out?"

Stoick bristled at his words. But he took a breath to calm himself. "Fine. Speak," he said.

Siver smiled in satisfaction before clearing his throat. "I've grown weary of the fighting Stoick. And I think it's time we put our clan's blood feud to rest," he began. Stoick raised an eyebrow skeptically. "It's the truth. So I propose peace between our tribes. And all I ask for is one thing in return," Siver stated.

"And that is?" Stoick asked.

"Let us establish peace as in the way of old," he said before shifting his gaze to Hicca. "I ask for your daughter's hand in marriage," he finally revealed. AT this the crowd gasped and Hicca's eyes went wide in surprise. Next to her, Ash placed himself in front of her while glaring daggers at Siver.

"You think I'd ever give my daughter to you? You're mad!" Stoick shouted.

Siver wasn't fazed. He remained calm and cool. "Come now Stoick, such a request isn't so absurd. It happens all the time. With our marriage we'd become family and ensure the end of our feud," he pressed. "Besides, from what I heard you disowned and exiled her. What should you care what happens to her. Isn't the safety of your tribe worth more than one outsider?"

Stoick was about to demand Siver leave his island before he ran him through with a spear before Hicca suddenly stepped forward. She walked up to Siver and looked him in the eyes.

"If I do go with youâ€¦you'll leave Berk alone?" she asked.

"On my word," Siver responded.

Hicca remained silent for a few moments. Then to everyone shock she said, "Ok."

"What?" Stoick asked aloud.

"I'll go with him. I'll marry him," Hicca said not facing her

father.

"Splendid," Siver said with a malicious grin.

"Hicca you can't honestly believe he'll agree to the terms?" Stoick asked in disbelief.

"I can hear his heart dad. He's not lying," she said turning to look into her father's face. As Stoick opened his mouth to argue Hicca cut him off. "You were right dad. I care about you all. If marrying him will protect the tribe, then I'll do it," she told him.

"Hicca no," Stoick said coming up to her and taking her hand. "You don't have to do this," he whispered to her.

"It's what would have happened to me in the old days anyway," she said with a sad smile. Stoick flinched at her words. Back then he had thought the same thing; that he would have her married off to form an alliance or peace with another tribe.

"I can't let you do this. I forbid it," he demanded weakly.

Hicca just held her sad smile. "You gave up that right six years ago dad," she muttered softly before gently pulling her hand free of his grip. Stoick stepped back. To stunned to say anything.

Suddenly Hicca was grabbed by her shoulder before being whipped around to face a panicked Ash. "Hicca don't do this," he begged.

"I'm doing this for everyone Ash. Including you. This isn't selfishness. Its selflessness," she said holding his gaze.

"I don't care!" he cried out. "I'm not letting you go Hicca. I refuse to let you leave," he said with conviction. "Hicca, I love-," you he began before Hicca placed a finger to his lips. Then she leaned in and stood on her tip toes before whispering into his ears. What she said made no sense. As he was about to pull back to question her felt a stab at his neck. Suddenly everything started to go blurry. He looked into Hicca's eyes as the world started to spin. "Hicca," he whispered out as he tried to hang onto consciousness. Then everything went black.

Everyone watched as Hicca supported Ash's weight before handing him off to a nearby villager.

Then she turned to look at Siver before handing over her weapons who were taken by his men. The village and her friends watched in shock as they saw their heiress giving up everything to protect them. If it had been anyone else in her place, war would be declared.

"Shall we?" she asked Siver once her weapons were collected.

Siver nodded before ushering her along toward his ship. He spared one last look to Stoick and smirked evilly. What he'd just done was better than hurting him physically. This was taking the last thing the man had. This was stabbing him in the soul.

Stoick caught the smirk. Clenching his fist he snarled before grabbing a sword off one of his men and advancing on Siver. He

wouldn't let Hicca go again. Not to this man. If war was the cost of keeping his daughter. Then so be it.

Siver, having caught his movement suddenly reached out and grabbed Hicca. In the next instant a knife was at her throat as he glared at Stoick challengingly.

Stoick stopped his advance when he saw Siver's knife at Hicca's throat. "LET HER GO DAMN YOU!" he roared.

"Now, now Stoick. You and I are going to be family soon. Let's not do something we'll regret," he said smoothly.

Hicca wrinkled her nose. "Yuck. You smell worse than a dragon. One whiff of you and I want to puke," she said in disgust. But then she turned her gaze and locked eyes with Snotlout. He noticed this and narrowed his eyes at her. She seemed to be trying to tell him something he didn't understand.

With that, Siver dragged Hicca away and onto his ship. Leaving the Hooligan tribe to watch them go. Stoick's shoulders sagged as the ship got further and further away. Carrying his daughter away from him. He'd lost her once again. And it had been his fault. He couldn't send anyone after her, Siver had made it clear he'd kill her if he tried.

Siver had broken him. He watched the ship go, deaf and blind to anything else.

"Hicca," he choked out.

On board Siver's ship. Hicca had been shackled. All around her the Scarred One's sneered evilly at their leader's prize. Siver stood in front of her and reached down to tilt her chin up to look at her.

"Once we get home, we'll prepare for the wedding. We'll have it three day after we arrive," he said firmly. "Anything to say to your new people darling?" he asked.

Hicca narrowed her eyes before turning to gaze at the entire crew. Then coming full circle she looked back up to Siver. The next words out of her mouth gave everyone the shivers. They were said with such malice and venom that it seemed she was telling the truth.

"I'm going to _kill_ every last one of you. EVERY. LAST. ONE."

* * *

><p>New chapter. Tell me what you think.

23. Chapter 23

****Clever Girl****

Ash came to an unknown amount of time later. The blackness of his mind started to clear and his senses started to process information once again. His eyelids fluttered before finally opening. He was immediately met with the sight of a familiar ceiling. He was in his

house. And if he had to guess, on his couch. With a groan he sat up. His body and head screamed in protest but he ignored them. Glancing around the room he saw his friends.

"Oh Ash. Thank the gods you're awake!" Fishlegs said happily from his kitchen.

Slowly Ash got off the couch. "Where's Hicca?" he asked lowly.

The twins and Fishlegs exchanged nervous glances. "Wellâ€¦you seeâ€¦the thing is," Fishlegs began babbling nervously.

"Where. Is. Hicca?" Ash asked again losing his patience.

Fishlegs sighed in defeat. "She's gone Ash. She went with Siver," he muttered sadly.

Ash felt his heart drop. So she'd gone after all. "How long have I been out?" he asked next.

Fishlegs swallowed nervously. "You were out for the rest of the day Ash. Its early morning now."

Ash's eyes widened in shock. He'd been out that long? His face twisted into a snarl before he stalked toward Fishlegs. The boy was terrified by his expression and backed up nervously until he was leaning back against a counter. "WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME UP?!" he shouted angrily.

"We did Ash honestly. We tried everything shouting, slapping, smelling salts, Gothi, we even threw a bucket of water on you. Nothing worked," Fishlegs quickly blurted out.

That only mollified Ash somewhat. Turning his back on Fishlegs he walked over to his kitchen table. He tried to control the maelstrom of emotions brewing inside of him. He leaned over his table, placing his palms on the surface and took deep breaths through the nose. But they didn't do a thing.

He was angry. Angry that Hicca had done this. Angry that she had given herself up to the enemy so easily. Angry that her reasons for going so were so noble. But most of all, he was angry that he hadn't stopped her. The girl he loved had slipped out of his life again. And now she was in the hands of that monster.

His anger spiked within him. His body boiling over with rage he raised his hand up off the table before slamming the sides of his fist down against it. With a wordless shout of rage he did it again. And again. And again. The others only watched him. Not sure of what they could do. With a final cry he slammed his fists down once more on the table and it split in two.

His ire not placated he walked over to his couch. Crouching down and grabbing the base he flipped it over and across the room. Then he stomped to the closet door and punched a hole in it. None of this was helping.

As he started looking around the room for other things to destroy Ruffnut spoke up. "Ash, what did Hicca say to you before she drugged you?" she asked.

Ash looked at her. Then he turned away. "It doesn't matter," he said quietly.

"What did she say Ash?" Ruffnut asked again.

"What the Hel does it matter Ruffnut?" Ash shouted looking to her. "She's gone. She's gonna marry Siver. And we'll never see her again," he spat at her.

Ruffnut glared at Ash. In a dash she rushed across the room and punched him. This took Ash by surprise, causing him to stumble back and look at her in bewilderment. "That's our friend Ash. And if you were to get over your own damn self-loathing and bullshit and think about, things don't add up," she shouted at him. Ash raised an eyebrow at her. Not sure what she was getting at. "Think about it. Do you remember what she did when you tried to force her into marrying you? And she actually liked you, you think she'd just go off and agree to marry that half troll?"

Ash thought about it and it actually made sense. "Hicca has never been one to just give up like that. She wouldn't just take it sitting down. Now what the Hel did she say before I fucking murder you Hofferson," she demanded harshly.

Ash averted his gaze as he tried to think back to what Hicca had whispered to him. And then he remembered. He furrowed his brows in confusion before looking back to Ruffnut. "She said, 'Say it to me next time'," he said.

The others exchanged glances. "Well that makes it sound like she expects to see us again. You think she wants us to come and get her?" Fishlegs asked unsure.

"But how?" Tuffnut asked aloud. "We have no idea where Siver is. No one does."

As the others started talking back and forth, Snotlout, who had been quiet the entire time was thinking to himself. He had been racking his brain all day and night to figure out what Hicca had been trying to tell him. He was sure she'd been trying to give him a secret message or something. But he just couldn't figure it out. He needed to focus.

Then he was struck with an idea. Lowering himself onto the floor he sat down and cross his legs. Then he closed his eyes and lowered his head, placing his hands onto his knees. Then he started taking deep breaths as he began to clear his mind. He blocked out the voices of his friends as he drifted deeper into his relaxed state. Finding his center, he started trying to decipher the message.

Thinking back, he figured it must have been in the last words she said, since she'd looked eyes with him after that. _What did she say?_ He asked himself. _Something about Siver being smelly._ He said mentally while thinking back. Yeah, that had been it. But that wouldn't do. He needed to remember exactly what she'd said.

He focused harder. Dredging through his memory to recall her exact words. _'Yuck. You smell worse than a dragon. One whiff of you and I want to puke'_ . Yeah. That had been it. So what had been the message?

He started repeating the words again and again in his mind. And he felt something tingle in his subconscious.

He started picking apart the sentence. Trying to figure out what exactly had sparked something in his mind. '_â€|worse than a dragon. One whiff of you and I want to puke'. _He was getting closer. He could feel it. Something was nagging in the back of his head. _Come on Snotlout. Hicca is counting on you. She entrusted this message to you._ He told himself to spur himself on.

He tried again, '_â€|worse than a dragon. One whiffâ€|'_. He tried again, _'â€|a dragon. One whiffâ€|'_. _He was almost there. He could feel it, _'â€|dragon. One whiffâ€|'_. _Close but not quite. Hold onâ€|what if I, _he thought to himself_. 'â€|dragonâ€|whiff'. _And that's when it clicked. _Dragon Whiff. _

"I GOT IT!" he said leaping to his feet. He turned around to face the others who wore confused expressions on their faces. "Dragon Whiff," he said with an excited smile. He others only looked at him funny. He palmed his forehead as he realized they didn't know what it was. "Dragon Whiff is a special type of dragon nip Hicca found in Japan," Snotlout explained.

"And?" Ash asked.

"She used it to make a specialâ€|perfume or something that Toothless can track. She once told me how she found the headquarters of an illegal slave smuggling operation by letting her self be captured and having Toothless track her to the hideout. Don't you see? That's what she's doing now?" he shouted happily.

The others all processed his words before a small spark of hope lit up within them. "Fishlegs, where is Toothless now?" Ash asked his friend.

"He's at the docks. When we told him what happened he tried to go after Hicca, but he can't fly," he explained.

"Everyone come on," Ash said leading the way out of his house and towards the docks in a sprint. This could be their chance. If Toothless could find Hicca they could rescue her. And find out where Siver's main base was. Reaching the docks, the group watched as Toothless was trying in vain to get into the air. The dragon roared and screeched in effort as he though himself into the sky and flapped his wings as hard as he could. But every time he would come back down to the earth, not being able to balance himself without his rider and prosthetic.

"Toothless," Ash called out to the dragon as he approached. Toothless turned his head toward Ash and yowled at him. Then he flicked his head toward the ocean before yowling again. "I know boy. You want to go after Hicca. But I need to ask you something," Toothless narrowed his eyes and cocked his head to the side before cooing inquisitively. "Can you find Hicca?" He asked hopefully. Toothless' ear flaps twitched at his rider's name. Then he growled before giving an affirmative nod. Ash's face broke into an excited smile.

"But how is he going to lead us there?" Fishlegs asked behind him. "He can't fly on his own and none of us know how to use the tailfin," he reminded everyone.

Ash racked his brain for a solution and it hit him. "Gobber. Hicca told me during Snoggletog that she built Toothless a tailfin that he could fully operate on his own for the dragon migration. I bet it's still in Gobber's," he said excitedly. The others' faces lit up. They had a plan. They could find Hicca. They would find her. They would bring her back.

His spirit being fueled by determination Ash turned to face his friends. "Guys. Get your weapons and saddle up your dragons. Meet back at the docks in 30 minutes. I'm going to Gobber's," he ordered firmly. The others nodded and ran off.

Ash dashed to Gobber's. Reaching the forge he shouted for Gobber.

"Coming," came the smith's voice. Moments later, the old smith hobbled out. But his usual cheery demeanor was somber and melancholy. "Oh hey lad," he greeted with a fake smile.

"Gobber, do you happen to know where the tailfin Hicca built for Toothless to operate on his own is?" he asked.

"Sure. It's in the back," Gobber said with a shrug. "Poor dragon. He's gonna have to fly on his own from now on. That girl. So noble," he said with a sniff.

"Gobber. Hicca planned this," Ash informed him. Gobber's head shot up in surprise. "Hicca had something on her Toothless can track. She's leading us right to Siver's base," Ash explained.

Gobber processed his words before his face broke into a beaming smile. "OH HAHAAHAHAHA," Gobber bellowed out. "AH KNEW IT! Oh that clever girl. By the gods she almost had me," Gobber said with a hearty laugh in relief.

"Alright lad. We need to tell the chief and then I'll get Toothless' tail strapped on," he said firmly. Ash nodded in agreement. The chief would want to know about this. They both hurried over to the chief's house. Stopping at the door they knocked and waited for him to answer the door. But after a few minutes of waiting, no one came. They tried again and still no one. Exchanging a worried glance, they entered the chief's home.

He was sitting at the table. Staring aimlessly into a mug of mead. Gobber and Ash approached. They gasped at what they saw. The chief's eyes were desolate. He looked like he had aged at least five years. He didn't even acknowledge their presence. This had Ash worried. Stoick was usually always so strong and full of fire. He barely recognized this shell of a man.

"What do we do Gobber?" Ash asked quietly.

"I know what to do. You just got to handle this delicately," the smith said confidently. Then he limped into the kitchen and came back with a mug. He placed it down on the table before going back and retuning with a pitcher of water. Gobber poured some water into the mug. Swirling the cup and letting it slosh around he started moving it toward the chief. Ash assumed he was offering him water. He was wrong.

To his surprise Gobber threw the water in the chief's face. That snapped him from his daze as he sputtered in surprise. Then Gobber grabbed the side of Stoick's chair. "Get up you lazy lout," he yelled. The chief fell from his feet before leaping to his feet. His face full of anger. As he was about to demand an explanation Gobber cut in. "Hicca is leading us right to Siver's front door Stoick."

Stoick immediately froze. "What?" he breathed out.

"That's right. You're clever girl has got some kind of oil on her that her dragon can track," Gobber said with a chuckle. Stoick took in the news and just stared dumbly. Unsure of how to react. "Now we need our chief to lead a rescue mission to bring her back. And she needs her father," Gobber said firmly while jabbing Stoick in the chest.

Stoick turned to look at Ash for conformation. Ash nodded. The chief processed what he'd been told before his face broke into a smile. Then it immediately formed into a scowl. "Ohhhâ€|that girl," he growled out. "She's so stubborn. She gets it from her mother," Stoick said to himself.

"I remember a Viking who was just as reckless and boar headed back in the old days," Gobber said jokingly.

"When we get her back I'm grounding her untilâ€|until," the chief said pacing the room.

"Until she's as old as Gothi," Gobber suggested.

"Yes. Until she's as old as Gothi. And there will be no flying. No ninja missions. And no boys," he said with a nod.

"Well maybe one boy," Gobber said shifting his eyes to Ash.

"Fine, one boy," Stoick amended. Then he turned to look at Ash. "Ash. Get your friends and their dragons together quickly. And make sure one of you brings a messenger Terror. We're going to get our girl back," he said with resolve.

Ash nodded before taking off to his house. Bursting through his front door he ran to grab his battle axe. Just as h was about to grab it, the object next to it caught his attention. It was the sword Hicca had made him. The Katana. After a moment of deliberation he snatched up the sword before looping it through his belt. Then he ran outside and saddled up Stormfly before mounting her and flying towards the docks.

When he got there, he saw his friends ready to go. Ruffnut was checking to see if her shuriken were all accounted for. But this time they were covered in poisons she'd obtained from Gothi. The twins both had spears while Snotlout had a long sword and Fishlegs had his Warhammer. Ash asked Fishlegs if he happened to have a messenger Terror with him. Fishlegs nodded and patted Meatlug's saddle bag.

After a few minutes Stoick arrived. On his back was a spear like weapon. It had been the one Hicca had made for him. He was joining

them on the rescue mission. Gobber followed close behind. He made his way over to Toothless with prosthetic and saddle in hand. Then he strapped them on and saddled Toothless. With permission, Stoick was allowed to ride on him.

Everyone exchanged glances and nodded affirmatively. Then Stoick gave Toothless the signal to go and he obliged. Leaping to the air and gaining altitude he settles at a comfortable height and started sniffing the air. Picking up the scent of the Dragon Whiff he sped forward with the other riders right behind him.

"Hang on Hicca. We're coming," Ash whispered. He would get her back.

And he'd never let her go again.

* * *

><p>New chapter. Come on sillies. Did yu really think Hicca would actually marry that guy. Do you seriously not remember what she did to Ash?

24. Chapter 24

****Ready or Not****

Hicca was sitting in a prison cell on whatever island the home base of the Scarred Ones was. She didn't know because she was blindfolded on the way here. Probably so she wouldn't be able to sail back if she escaped. She's wasn't certain what time of the day it was as the base appears to be carved into a mountain. She was in her cell on the floor while Siver talked to her about the plans for their wedding.

Hicca wasn't not listening at all. She didn't plan on marrying Siver. She'd rather die. She simply agreed to the terms so he'd take her back to his home base. Unfortunately since she made this plan up on the spot she didn't have time to relay the details to anyone. She prayed that Snotlout would figure out the part about the Dragon Whiff and get Toothless to lead them here. If they came and found the island Siver's main forces were, Berk could attack it and end this. But still, she was taking a big gamble. She has no idea if Toothless can track her from this distance. Not to mention they've never tried doing this over water before. Only miles of land.

"Does that sound good to you darling?" Siver asked her. She hated it when he calls her that. There was only one person she hopes will say that to her one day. But she guessed it was better than him touching her. Luckily for her, Siver considered himself a 'gentleman' and chose to wait until after they are wed before he claimed her body. It doesn't matter. He'll be dead long before that.

"Sounds fine," she said blankly.

"And I've even summoned the entire tribe," Siver added. Hicca smiled to herself inwardly. The entire tribes in one place. Couldn't be more perfect. And Siver doesn't seem to suspect a thing. He's way too arrogant. He thinks there no way she can escape.

"Lucky me," she said dryly. "Mind if I ask you something, hubby?"

"Anything darling," he replied.

"Why did you used to go by Siver the Scarrer?"

Siver's eyes lit up as he remembered his old name fondly. "Because. You see back in the old day when I would kill an opponent, I would leave a deep scar on their face as my calling card," he said proudly. "Everyone would know my mark. Everyone would shudder in fear as they realized who had killed their loved ones," he said with an evil smile.

"And then you changed your name to Siver the Scarred after your battle with my dad?" Hicca asked.

The smile on Siver's face immediately is replaced by a frown. "Correct," he said as he ran a finger over the Scar on his cheek. "After our battle I decided to change my moniker," he finished blankly.

"I heard you ran like a little girl," Hicca added with a smirk.

Siver bristled and scowled at her. "I survived lass," he growled.

"By running like a Tiny. Little. Girl," Hicca added with acid.

Siver scowls deepened and he glared at her. He stepped towards her before grabbing her by the front of her Shozoku and lifting her up to eye level. "You should learn some respect for your future husband," he said lowly.

"I intend to kill you long before we become wed," Hicca said holding his eyes and glaring at him.

Siver smiled in dark amusement. "I like my lasses feisty. I hope you like it rough," he said licking his lips.

"I hope you like it in the neck," Hicca growled back.

"Maybe I should just have you now," Siver suggested. "Why wait?" he said threateningly.

"I would expect nothing less from a man like you," Hicca spat at him.

Siver remained silent for a moment before chuckling. "Oh you'd like that wouldn't you? For me to prove that I'm the monster you think me to be," he said holding her gaze. "But no. I'll wait. I want you to feel the hours go by and know that nothing will stop this wedding. You will be mine. And with you by my side, I will rule all," he said darkly.

"What about not attacking Berk like you promised?"

"I will keep to that. But from what I hear, you can train dragons. So you will make me an army of them. Then I will set my army on the

archipelago. And if Berk joins the other tribes in an attempt to stop me," he said with a menacing smile. "Well, then I'll crush them too," he said with a light shrug.

Hicca figured he was planning something like that. Though she could hear he had been telling the truth she knew he wasn't going to just let his grudge with Berk and her father go. "But here's a taste of what is to come," he said before he pulled her to him and planted a kiss on her lips. Hicca had to will herself not to puke. It got worse when he stuck his tongue into her mouth. He invasively probed and explored her mouth. She wanted to bite it off so badly. But she just bore with it until he pulled away and threw her to the floor. "Let's see if you're feeling more respectful after a few days without food and water," he said looking down at her. Hicca spat in disgust at the floor before glaring up at him.

With that he turned on his heel and walked out. Closing the cell behind him he looked to the guard, "No food and just enough water to keep her alive. Nobody is to go into her cell," he orders firmly. The guard nodded before he turned to walk off.

Hicca released a breath in relief. She hoped pissing him off would get him to leave. Still, she could have done without that kiss. Hopefully when she got out of here Ash could make her forget the feeling of Siver's tongue in her mouth.

Sitting up she leaned back against the wall and looked down to the shackles at her hands and feet. "They think these can hold me?" she said with a smirk.

These people knew nothing about ninja.

* * *

><p>"Come on Toothless. Find her," Stoick said desperately. The riders had been following Toothless for hours now. But they'd hit a snag. Toothless was having trouble tracking the scent of Hicca. He swept his head back and forth and groaned in frustration. He's never tracked her from such a great distance before. Not to mention the fact that the sea was throwing him off. The winds and the smell of the ocean are interfering with the trail. He flew in a wide circle as he tried to find where the scent is the strongest.<p>

"Please Toothless. You got to find her. You're the only one that can," Ash yelled out to spur him on. He's frantic to find her. Every moment they don't retrieve her is another moment she's with Siver. And though he knows she's strong enough to take of herself, the part of him that loves her and wants nothing more to protect her won't stop worrying until he has her in his arms.

Stormfly could sense her rider's urgency to find his mate. She looked back at him and could see the worry in his eyes. She'd never seen him this upset about anything before. Only the kind girl can do this to him. Facing forward she began to sniff the wind. She closed her eyes as she took several sniffs while trying to detect her rider's mate. Suddenly her eyes snapped open as she picked it out. She tensed her muscles.

"Stormfly?" Ash began to question as he felt her tensing underneath him. Then he yelped as she shot passed Toothless. She turned her head

and squawked back at the other dragons. Immediately they formed up behind her. "Stormfly what are you doing?" Ash asked as he attempted to pull her back to slow down. But Stormfly doesn't listen. She just kept flying straight ahead. While she respected the Night Fury's abilities, she really had the better nose for this.

Ash looked questioningly at Stormfly before glancing over his shoulder at Toothless. He wasn't protesting so he guessed that Stormfly must be going in the right direction. She's leading them to Hicca. "Ok girl. Find Hicca. Come on girl," he said as he urged her on. Stormfly squawked affirmatively before picking up speed.

"Hang on Hicca. We're coming," Ash said to the wind.

* * *

><p>The guard assigned to watch Hicca was glancing down at her weapons curiously. He was bored so he decided to go through her belongings. He found a whole bunch of weapons he'd never seen before. There were knives, some kind of star shapes weapons, a strange sickle with a chain, and then there was her sword. The guard picked the sword up to examine it.<p>

"Hmm. This is a sword?" he asked aloud. This thing was tiny. Not like the real sword on his back. What kind of weapon was this?

He glanced back to the cell door holding the prisoner. It was just a little girl. Yet his comrades had told him that she had killed many of them single-handed. How could a girl so small be so dangerous? Curious and bored he decided to mess with the girl. Sword still in hand he walked over to the cell door. Producing the key he unlocked the door and enters. He could see the girl sitting against the back wall. He knew he was ordered not to enter, but what harm could she do? He could clearly see she was still shackled.

"So you're supposed to be some kind of warrior?" he asked with a sneer. "Kind of tiny aren't you lass?" he asked mockingly. The girl remained silent. "And what kind of weapon is this? It's the size of a butter knife," he said as he looked her sword over. As he examines it from top to bottom, something catches his eye. There's was a small dial at the bottom of the hilt. Curious he begin to move a hand to see what it does.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," the prisoner said speaking up.

"And why not?" he asked challengingly.

He could just see her shrug. "Just trust me on that."

He 'hmped' shortly. No one told him what to do. Least of all some prisoner. Like he would trust her anyway. Taking his hand he turned the dial until he heard a click. A moment later he cried out in pain as spike spring out from the hilt of the sword. With a yelp he tosses the sword into the air and looked down at his bleeding hand.

In the next instant he freezes as he felt something cold and metallic pierce his stomach. Looking down he saw the girl is on her feet. Her shackles were off and the blade of her sword is in between her palms. With the pointed end going into him.

"I warned you," she said with a smirk. Then she drags the blade across the stomach. Pulling it out the other end she spins and slashed it across his throat. The guard is shocked as he fell to the ground and died.

Hicca smiled to herself proudly. "And sis said that would never work," she said to herself. Carefully she held the sword by the blade and turned it upside down. Then she turned the dial counter clockwise to withdraw the spikes. As she's about to leave the cell she grabs the guard's key ring. It might come in handy.

Exiting the cell and shutting the door behind her, she smiled as she saw her weapons laid out in front of her. She walked over to the table and began reequipping herself. She had picked the locks on her shackles hours ago. Siver hadn't known about the hidden compartment in the bottom of her boot that contained a lock picking tool. She had just been waiting for the right moment.

As she grabbed her Kusarigama she heard a sound to her right. Glancing over, she saw a guard walk around the corner. He locked eyes with her and froze. As he opened his mouth to yell Hicca sprang into action. She threw the weight end of her weapon at the man and struck him in the throat. The man's cry was cut short as his vocal cords had been paralyzed by the impact. Pulling the weight back she threw it again and wrapped it around his left foot. With a sharp tug she pulled him off his feet and flat onto his back.

As the guard groaned in pain and tried to clear his ringing head the wind was knocked out of him as Hicca slammed her knees into his chest. Before he could react Hicca slapped her left hand over his mouth before slashing the sickle end of her weapon across his throat. The man sputtered and choked as his blood started leaking out of him. Hicca simply stepped off him and walked back to collect the rest of her gear as the man died.

Hicca reequipped herself before sitting down and digging into the meal on the first guard's plate. She was going to need her strength. Finishing off the meal she washed it down with a few gulps of mead.

Then she started to stretch as she was getting ready to start her objective.

Rule of thumb, never, ever bring a Ninja, a master of stealth, saboteur, and assassination into your home base. A base that was carved into a mountain and had caves. With lots of dark places to hide. Siver was going to have to learn this the hard way. She was going to kill everyone she came across. No mercy.

Rising to full height Hicca smirked to herself. Then she pulled up her mask and cracked her neck and knuckles.

"Ready or not Siver. Here I come," she whispered aloud. Then she began marching down the halls of the base. She walked with purpose, intent on finally bringing this to an end.

* * *

><p>New chapter. Siver gonna get it.

>And as to why Stormfly can pick up Hicca's scent better, its because in HTTYD 2 Nadders are now considered tracker class dragons like Skullcrusher is. Thus i'm foreshadowing he eventual discovery and whatnot. Hope you like. Feel free to review.

25. Chapter 25

****The Ninja Way****

Hicca was making her way through the mountain base of the Scarred Ones. So far they'd yet to realize she was free and moving about the hideout. As she was going she was killing off the members of their tribe one by one. But her main goal was Siver. She wanted to kill him more than anyone. The only problem was she was completely lost. She only had a vague sense of direction since she was blindfolded at the time she was brought into the base.

As she came to a fork in the tunnel she was going down she peeked around the corner and saw two Scarred One approaching. She crouched low and drew her blowgun from its holster. Then she reached into her back pouch for some darts. These were tipped with poison. Some of her strongest and most lethal stuff. She wasn't sparing any lives at the moment.

She pressed herself back against the wall as she waited for them to pass. She hoped they weren't going to make a turn. It seemed luck was on her side as they kept going. Loading a dart she brought the blowgun up to her lips. Taking a deep breath she aimed for the one at the back's neck and fired.

She knew she'd hit her mark when the man slapped a hand over his neck in surprise and made a grunt of pain. She quickly loaded another dart as the man in front turned to check what had happened and she fired again. Hitting him in the neck as well.

Putting her blowgun away she stood up and whistled softly to get their attention. They turned to her in surprise and she smiled at them. They were about to charge her when their legs gave out from under them and they collapsed. The poison had done its job. They died in the next moment. Hicca walked over to their bodies and collected her darts before stepping over them and continuing down the left tunnel.

A couple of right and left turns later she paused as she could hear voice up ahead. She approached more slowly, ducking into shadows as she continued along. Eventually she reaches the point where the voices are coming from. It's a passageway riddles with door on both sides. Living quarters she assumes. She proceeds cautiously and peeks into one particular doorway. In it she see a room filled with about ten Scarred Ones. They were all huddled around a bench as they played a card game.

She quickly darted passed the doorway without being seen and checks the other rooms. They were filled with beds and cots but are empty. She formulated a plan of attack as she noticed that the rooms were lit by lanterns. She entered the largest room and extinguished all but one lantern. Then she went back to the doorway of the room where the men were.

Taking a breath she stood up and moved in front of the doorway. The men still hadn't noticed her. With a frown she cleared her throat loud enough to get their attention. They all turned to look at her in surprise.

"Oh no! I've been discovered. Whatever shall I do?" Hicca said melodramatically while placing her hand over her forehead in mock fear.

The men all stood up and grabbed their weapons before charging her. Hicca quickly dashed out of the doorway before running to the room with the one lit lantern. She glanced over her shoulder to make sure the men noticed where she went and smiled to herself. She dashed into the room and stood at the far end and picked up the lantern. She waited as one by one the men filled the room and surrounded her.

Then one closed the door behind them and they all smiled at her evilly. "Looks like you're locked in here with us lass," one of them said darkly. The men all smiled, thinking they had her trapped.

"Correction. You're all trapped in here with me," Hicca said with a smirk. They all raised an eyebrow at her confidence while she brought the lantern up to her face. With a small breath she blew out the flame. Leaving the room absolutely dark.

Over the next few minutes the sounds of a struggle could be heard from outside the room along with the screams of men. Then finally it was silent before Hicca stepped out and shut the door behind her. She had a proud smile on her face as she dusted her hands off.

"Never fight a ninja in the dark," she said aloud.

With that she proceeded along the passageway. Keeping her senses alert for more Scarred Ones and hopefully Siver.

* * *

><p>After a few hours of following Stormfly the group was lead to an island known as JÃ¶tnar Island. They were initially confused when they arrived at the island was empty and devoid of signs of men. But that changed when Stormfly circled the island before diving down and flying into a crack in a Cliffside. Opening her mouth she lit the way as they flew into the dark cave. As they went deeper they could see the cave was lit with torches along the walls. This was the hideout of the Scarred Ones after all. It was no wonder no one could find them.<p>

The riders landed on a ledge and got off their dragons. Looking over the edge they could make out a large cove below them. It was huge and large enough for a fleet of Scarred Ones ships. The entrance was narrow and only allowed for one or two ships to pass at any given time. It was a very clever place to make a base.

"We're here," Stoick whispered quietly. The other nodded in agreement. Toothless was rumbling and grunting anxiously. He could smell the Dragon Whiff more clearly now. Hicca was here.

"Did any of you bring a messenger Terror?" Stoick asked the

group.

"I did chief," Fishlegs said pulling out a small red Terror from Meatlug's saddlebag. Stoick nodded before taking a piece of paper and a stick of charcoal and writing a note for Spitelout. Then he attached it to the Terror before whispering for it to return to Berk. The terror chirped in understanding before flying off toward the entrance of the cave.

"What was that chief?" Tuffnut asked curiously.

"A message for Spitelout. Now that we know where Siver's forces are we attack. I asked him to send the riders along with our ships. I also told him to inform the other tribes," he explained. Glancing down Stoick could see that the number of ships were only slightly bigger than Berk's forces. Siver hadn't been bluffing but this was a force Berk could handle. And with the other tribes backing them up, Siver could be defeated.

"All right everyone, we're going down there. Leave your dragons. Only Toothless comes," he ordered. The riders nodded and began making their way down the rocks carefully.

Down at the bottom of the cavern, the riders were on the sands of a small beach peering out from behind some rocks. They were looking at what looked like the entrance to the base. It was an iron door being guarded by two armed guards. There were torches on either side of the door so sneaking up on them would be difficult.

"I might be able to hit them with my shuriken from here," Ruffnut offered.

Stoick mulled it over, trying to formulate the best plan of attack. He was thinking a distraction might have been best. As he was thinking, at the back of the group, Fishlegs narrowed his eyes in determination before silently backing away from the group.

"Ok here what we'll do," Stoick said turning around and facing the riders. They all stopped low as he crouched down to whisper his plan. "First off, Fishlegsâ€¦" he paused to look at the young man only to find him gone.

"Where in the name of Odin is Fishlegs?" Stoick whispered shouted in surprise. The others started looking around for the young man when two cries were heard from the direction of the door. They looked back at it and saw Fishlegs standing there. His shoulders were heaving as he was breathed rapidly. They looked down and saw both the guards unconscious.

They exchanged surprised glances before rising up and walking towards the boy.

Fishlegs was trying to slow his racing heart. Had he really just done that? He looked down in disbelief and saw that there were indeed two unconscious guards at his feet. "Oh man I did it," he whispered excitedly. "I am ninja, I am stealth, I am silenceâ€¦" he began to whisper, reciting Hicca's mantra.

"Fishlegs," came a sudden whisper behind him, causing him to yelp in terror and whirl around to the faces of his friends. Ash was smiling

at him and nodded at him in pride. "Not bad Legs," he said before giving him a light punch on the arm. Then he stepped around him and opened the door before entering the base.

"Good job lad," Stoick said in praise as he patted the boy on the shoulder and followed after Ash.

Snotlout and Tuffnut gave him a thumbs up while Ruffnut kissed him on the cheek as a reward. Blushing and smiling in pride he followed after his friends and into the base. Toothless followed behind them.

It was time to find Hicca.

* * *

><p>Hicca was fighting a Scarred One. She was dodging his punches as he advances on her snarling in fury. Hicca had taken out a hallway filled with his comrades leaving only him left as he fought for revenge. Hicca had no problem facing the man. While one punch would definitely do some major damage, she wouldn't let herself be hit.<p>

As the man threw a jab at her right Hicca weaved her to the left before bring the knuckles of her left hand crashing into his nose. The man shouted in pain as blood started pouring out. But before he could do anything Hicca grabbed his right arm raised it up, turned around, and then broke it violently over her shoulder. The man screamed in agony as his arm broke. Hicca then threw her left leg back, knocking the man off balance before pulling his arm forward and flipping him over and onto his back.

As the man crashed into the ground and the air was knocked out of him he released a groan in pain. Hicca quickly drew her kunai and slashed him across the throat before he could clear his head. A gasp of surprise caught her attention and she turned around to see three Scarred Ones coming down the tunnel she was in. One was leading the way with a battle axe at the ready. Narrowing her eyes, Hicca charged him.

She formulated a battle plan and threw her Kunai. Aiming for the man's leg, she hit her mark. Her weapon sank deeply into the man's leg causing him to drop to a knee and he attempted to pull the knife free. Hicca reached behind her and pulled out her Kusarigama. Equipping the weapon she hurled the sickle end of the weapon at the down man and got him in the neck. It stabbed deeply and he froze in shock. Hicca put on a burst of speed and stepped onto his shoulder and leapt.

The Scarred Ones behind the man froze side by side at the sight of Hicca flying at them. Hicca took advantage of their surprise and rammed her knees into the face of the Scarred Ones, knocking them out and onto the ground. Hicca rolled to disperse the force of her landing. Stopping in a crouched she yanked sharply on the chain and ripped the sickle out from the Scarred One from be fore's neck, opening a deep gash he wouldn't be able to stop. The man eyes bulged out of his head before he began bleeding out. He collapsed with a gasp and died shortly.

"Damn I'm good," Hicca said to herself as she slashed the remaining

two Scarred Ones she'd knocked out across the throat.

This was almost too easy.

* * *

><p>The others were making their way through the base as silently as they could. They'd yet to run into any Scarred Ones. They were obviously very confident that they couldn't be found. Ash lead the way as he peeked around corners and walked with purpose. He was determined to find Hicca and get her back.<p>

Slowly they made their way deeper and deeper into the base while being careful and listening intently for any signs of the enemy. Ash halted the group by raising his hand as he heard footsteps ahead of them. Peering around a corner he saw a Scarred One at the top of a carved staircase. The man would spot them if any one of them stepped into the open. Thinking it over, Ash signaled to Ruffnut. She crept forward and peered around the corner as he pointed the man out.

With a nod she reached into her back pouch and pulled out a poison covered shuriken. She calculated the distance and narrowed her eyes in concentration. Taking a breath she quickly stepped out and into the man's line of sight. He took notice of her and before he could cry out she hurled her shuriken. It whizzed through the air before burying itself into the man's throat. He pulled the shuriken out and tried to desperately stop the bleeding. But the poison started taking effect as his vision started to blur. Everything faded to black as he fell down the stairs and died.

Ruffnut smiled proudly and Ash clapped her on the shoulder before he stepped out from behind the corner and continued forward. He went up the stair with the other behind him. At the top of the stair there was a split in the tunnel. Ash chose the right tunnel. He then led the group to a large room. Looking inside he saw that there were Scarred Ones present. This looked to be a weapon storing room as there are racks of weapons. There was nowhere to hide. They'd have to fight them to move on.

He looked over his shoulder to his comrades. They nodded in understanding. Standing to full height Ash enter the room first. A Scarred One noticed him immediately and drew the sword at his hip. Ash draws the on at his own. He grips the hilt firmly with both hands and waited.

His friends entered and lined up next to him. At the ready as they picked out a Scarred One to engage. The two groups the charged at each other. The twins pick out one wielding a hatchet. Ruffnut is slightly behind Tuffnut as he charges forward with his spear. As the man raised his hatchet to attack, Ruffnut threw her shuriken, hitting him in the wrist of his weapon arm. The man cried out and dropped his weapon from pain just as her bother surged forward and thirsted his spear into the man's chest, stabbing him in the heart and killing him.

Snotlout picked out a man with a mace. The man swung at him, intent on bashing the side of his head. Snotlout ducked the attack before upper cutting the man. As the man jerked back in pain Snotlout grabbed the man by the shoulder and kneed him in the stomach. Lastly he grabbed the man by the head before slamming the seam of his helmet

against the man in a painful head butt that knocked the man out. Snotlout smiled triumphantly at his downed opponent. He hadn't even needed to draw his sword.

The chief engaged a man with a spear. Taking his own pole arm off his back he sidestepped the man's thrust before slashing at the man's head. In one clean slice the man's head is off. The chief glanced down at his weapon. Genuinely impressed by the sharpness and quality. His daughter could make a fine weapon.

Ash fought a man with a sword. Using his own sword he parried and blocked the man's attack as he waited for a good opportunity to strike. He got the chance as the man thrust his sword at him. Ash spun out of the way before slashing at the man's arm. Removing it in a clean slash. Before the man could cry out he spun to gain momentum before cutting the man's head off. Ash was surprised by how easy it was to remove a limb from the man. He hardly felt any resistance at all.

He glanced down at the sword in his hands. "Odin's beard," he said impressed. Hicca had been right. This was a damn good sword.

Fishlegs was about to engage a Scarred One wielding a war hammer when Toothless leapt over him and tackled the man to the ground. Stoking his fire he blasted the man in the face and reduced his head to ashes in an instant.

Everyone exchanged a look before nodding in confirmation that they were ok. Suddenly Toothless started to intently sniff the air. Then he pointed his snout at the ground before he rumbled happily. He could smell Hicca. She was close.

He started leading the group out of the room as he kept his snout pointed toward the ground. The others followed closely behind.

* * *

><p>A group of Scarred Ones were gathered outside a large food storage room. There were five of them standing and staring into the darkness that they had seen the prisoner run into. All of them were too scared to go in there after her. There were 15 of them in the beginning. But when they crowded into the doorway 10 of them had been killed by projectiles being hurled out of the darkness. Immediately one of them went and grabbed a shield. He blocked more projectiles as they flew out and was waiting for more. But none came.<p>

"Do you think she's out?" one of them asked. They all looked at each other, unsure. Slowly the man with the shield inched toward the door. He kept his shield up in case he threw more. Pausing at the doorway he waited and peered into the darkness. He couldn't see anything. Or hear anything for that matter.

He cautiously lowered his shield arm. Still no projectiles came. He turned to his comrades and smiled. "I think she's out lads." The others smiled back and sighed in relief until suddenly a length of chain shot out of the darkness and wrapped around his neck. He looked down at the chain wide eyed before he was pulled into the room. The other gaped in shock and called after him. The only

response was a guttural scream and then silence.

_~With 11 men down, the four did frown, and bid their friends
goodbye~_

_~For none could know, what in the darkness layed low, and someone
had to die~_

Came a sing song voice from the room.

The men growled in anger and frustration. She was taunting them. Practically daring them to come after her. A moment later a man they'd sent out earlier had returned with torches. They all took one and lit them up. Then they turned back towards the room and smirked.

"Let's get her lads," one of them said. The others nodded in agreement before. Following after him into the room. Even with the torches in hand the room was still quite dark. It was filled with sacks of grain, fruit, and barrels of water and mead.

The guards scanned the room before splitting up to search all around. Once man walked near shelves of pickled fish. He held his lantern in front of him and squinted to try and find something odd in the darkness. Then suddenly a weight landed on his shoulder and before he could even react his head was jerked violently to the right; breaking it and killing him.

The others heard a body fall to the floor and saw one of their men collapse. They made out a dark shape on top of him but before they could run to it, it vanished into the shadows. They all cursed before continuing their search.

One of them passed by some barrels. He walked slowly, straining his hearing in an attempt to find their allusive enemy. Suddenly he nearly stumbled as he tripped over something. Looking down, he jumped back as he saw it was the bod of their comrade from before. He took a step back before suddenly and hand clapped over his mouth and a knife slit his throat. The hand remained as he attempted to cry out, but was muffled. Slowly his strength drained away as everything went black.

The remaining three cursed again as they saw a black shape holding their comrade. They rushed toward it but it ducked behind the barrels and by the time they reached it, it was gone. The remaining men were getting nervous. One by one they were being killed off. Coming into this room had been a mistake. Slowly they backed toward each other. They kept in a triangle formation as they inched their way toward the door.

The man facing the doorway was sure they were going to get out when suddenly he heard the men behind him fall. He turned around to find them on the floor. Dead with darts sticking out of their necks. The man's breathing started to become panicked as he was the last one remaining. Suddenly he could hear footsteps moving around him.

He lifted his head up and held the lantern out in front of him as he tried to find the thing lurking in the shadows. He could barely make out movement at the very edge of the lantern's light. The man's heart was racing as he slowly tried to back away to the door.

As he inched his way toward it, it suddenly seemed as if it were miles away. He prayed to the gods that they let him escape this demon.

The gods apparently didn't hear or listen to his prayers.

He would never make out.

* * *

><p>As the riders made their way through the base they dealt with and killed other Scarred Ones they ran into. Luckily it seemed they had yet to be alerted to their presence as they weren't being swarmed with enemies from all direction. Toothless kept his nose to the ground as he tried to locate his rider. He would normally use his echolocation to find her but couldn't risk sending out a roar without being discovered.<p>

After who knows how long they came to a large set of double doors. They pushed it open slowly before entering. Inside was large room filled with benches. It reminded them of the great hall. It was lit with torches and there were large wooden columns supporting the roof. It was empty at the moment as they searched for an exit to lead them further into the base.

"My, my, my. What a surprise," came a familiar voice. The riders all turned their attention toward the front of the room. There was a balcony at the front of the room and Siver was standing there looking down at them. They all glared up at him as he raised his hands and began clapping at them.

"I must say old friend, I'm very impressed you've found my home," Siver said looking to Stoick.

Stoick glared up at him before pointing the end of his weapon at him. "I've come for my daughter Siver," he said loudly with resolve. "And I'll take her one way or the other."

Siver sneered down at Stoick and shook his head. "Tsk. Tsk. Stoick. I thought we had a deal," he said with a shrug. "It seems you can't be reasoned with. Oh well," he said before snapping his fingers. Suddenly from the side of the room men started pouring in. Armed to the teeth they filled the room and shut the doors behind them. The riders growled out at heaving been trapped. They kept their weapons at the ready as they huddled together.

"I commend you on getting this far. But you're in my home Stoick. I assume the rest of Berk is on its way here? So now my men will kill you while I take you daughter and make her my woman," he said triumphantly. "Too bad. We would have been family" he said as he raised his hand to give the signal o attack.

The riders tensed and prepared for what they knew was probably their last fight. Toothless began to stoke his fire when a familiar scent caught his attention. It was powerful. He turned his gaze up to Siver and smiled happily. Siver furrowed his brows in confusion until he suddenly stiffed as he felt something sharp at his back.

"Call them off Siver. Or I kill you where you stand," came a harsh

voice behind him.

Siver's eyes widened in surprise. "It can't be," he said in disbelief. He turned his head to glance over his shoulder and sure enough, there she was.

Everyone turned their attention to Siver and watched as he shifted enough to allow a black figure to be seen.

"Hicca," Ash shouted in happiness. Hicca kept her blade poking at Siver's back as she pulled down her mask and turned to look down at her friends. She smiled wide at them and mimed a kiss at Ash.

"Hey guys. About time you showed up," she said playfully. She turned her attention to Snotlout and smiled at him. "Got my message I assume Snotlout?"

"Psshh of course I did. Dragon Whiff duh," he said nonchalantly. Failing to mention that it took him half a day to figure it out. "All I had to do was meditate on it."

"I knew you could do it," she said with a smile. Then she turned her attention back to Siver and glared. "Looks like you lose Siver," she said lowly.

"Oh do I?" he asked calmly. "Let's see now. You're in my base surrounded by hundreds of my guards. You kill me, they kill your friends and then you. Don't kill me and they still kill your friends while I take you," he said confidently. Then he turned around slowly and faced Hicca. He looked down at her and smirked in victory. "I haven't lost anything."

Hicca held his gaze for a moment before dropping her gaze and bowing her head. The riders were surprised by her action. Was she giving up? That's what Siver assumed as he looked at her. She saw how hopeless the situation was. He'd won.

He watched Hicca as suddenly her shoulders began to shake. He raised an eyebrow at her behavior before a laughed bubbled out of her. Then she lifted her head up and locked eyes with him. Her eyes blazed with confidence. She smiled wide and proud.

"What's so funny then?" Siver asked with a frown.

"Its funny that you think you have me," Hicca said holding her smile. That smile made Siver's blood boil. "I couldn't help but notice that this room is probably at the very center of the mountain. And it looks as if there are no opening for any natural light to come in," Hicca began.

Siver cocked an eyebrow at her. What she said was true. The room was constantly illuminated by torches.

"So if someone were to extinguish all the torches it would be completely dark," she said with a crooked grin. She lowered her sword from Siver before she leapt off the balcony and onto a bench below. Hicca looked back up at him and smirked. "Try not to shit your pants," she said as she drew her kunai. She held her weapons in front of her and closed her eyes in concentration.

"Toothless," she said to the dragon. The dragon perked up and leapt into action. Getting what Hicca was getting at he began to flap his wings in all direction, blowing out the torches inside the room. As he did this Hicca thought back to one of the first lesson her Sensei Shou taught her. She remembered his words.

'_You have no need to fear the darkness Hicca. For we ninja become one with it. The shadows are our ally. They hide us. While they blind others. They give us strength. And when there is absolutely no light; a ninja is at their most powerful. And their most deadly'_

"Kill them all," Siver commanded. He didn't like where this was going. The girl was way too confident for this to be a bluff. His men tightened their grip on their weapons and tensed to surge forward.

As the last torch went out Hicca opened her eyes and locked eyes with Ash. She smiled mischievously at his confused expression and winked at him. Then the room went completely dark as the last torch went out.

The riders and Siver kept close together as they waited. They could heard something moving swiftly in the darkness. It seemed to be all around them at once as they heard the sound of something swiftly rushing by them. They could also heard things crashing to the ground and the cries and grunts from the Scarred Ones.

Then suddenly it was utterly silent. Not even the sound of the men could be heard as everyone waited for something to happen. Then in a blue flash, Toothless sot his fire at the torches one by one. When the room was completely illuminated, everyone gasped at what they saw. Or what the remaining people alive saw. The hundreds of men at Siver's beck and call were dead. All save a handful of them.

Everyone's jaws hit the floors as they tried to process what happened. Ash glanced up and saw Hicca standing back in her original spot. The blood dripping off her weapons being the clear indicator of what had happened.

She'd killed them all.

Her eyes were closed as she breathed steadily. Then she opened them and smiled. A smile of pride at what she'd done.

"That's impossible," came a hysteric voice of Siver behind her. Hicca turned around and smiled up at Siver. The usually calm man was filled with panic. This girl had killed his men all within a few moments. What the Hel did she do? How was that possible?

"What are you?" he shouted at her.

Hicca's smiled faded as her face became serious and cold. "I am silence. I am stealth. I am darkness," she began. Her voice was firm and filled menace.

Siver's breathing became rapid and panicked as he looked down at this girl. Or whatever she was.

"Fear is my weapon; the shadows are my ally," she said as he voice

grew louder and filled with strength. "I am a monster. I am a demon. I am death," Hicca said as she now shouted up at Siver.

Siver could feel himself being drenched in cold sweat. He had to run. This girl was going to be the death of him otherwise. He had to get away.

"I. AM. SHINOBI! Hicca finished with a glare that could freeze an ocean. Siver looked in the girl's eyes and saw one thing. It was written all over her face.

It said

I'm going to kill you.

* * *

><p>New chapter hope you like. Man Hicca is merciless. I wouldn't want to fight her.<p>

Tell me what you think

26. Chapter 26

****End of a bloodline****

Siver stood there frozen. He was absolutely paralyzed in shock as he looked down at the girl who had wiped out hundreds of his men singlehandedly in just a few moments. What kind of person could do such a thing? It should have been impossible.

The girl "no, the monster was glaring up at him. She stared daggers at him, her expression a promise of his demise at her hands. "Kill them all!" Siver shouted to his remaining men. His voice cracked with fear as he gave his orders.

The men hesitated for a moment before obediently charging with their weapons at the ready. Siver just stood there and watched. For the life of him he couldn't get his legs to move.

One man went for Hicca. With an axe at the ready he swung it vertically at her legs. But Hicca reacted quickly, with a leap she flipped off the table. The man swung his axe in the other direction, trying to behead her. Hicca ducked and stabbed the man in the stomach with her Ninjato before slitting his throat with her kunai.

The man gasped and died while other men rushed to his aid. Hicca put her weapons away and back flipped away from the charging men. After gaining a few feet of breathing room she stood at the ready and drew her Ninjato. Suddenly something bumped into her from behind. Glancing over her shoulder she saw she was back to back with Ash.

"Hey Ash," she said casually despite the life and death battle they were currently in.

Ash whirled around and looked down at her with a glare. He then raised a finger and pointed it in her face. "OHHHH! OOOOO! ARRRRGHHH!" he growled out as his finger shook. At one point he raised his hands up in what looked like a strangling motion. "I am so

mad at you right now Hicca!"

Hicca cocked her head to the side in confusion. "What did I do?" she asked indignantly.

His mouth fell open in disbelief. "You scared the crap out of me! That's what you did," he shouted at her. He paused and spun around to parry and slash at an attacking Scarred One before turning back to her to continue his argument. "I thought you were going to marry that monster."

Hicca narrowed her eyes at him in offense. "You honestly thought I would EVER marry that man. Do you seriously not remember the ass kicking I gave you when you tried to force me to marry you?" she shot back at him.

"You couldn't at least share your plan with me?" he retorted.

"I kind of made it up on the spot. I didn't exactly have time to give you the details."

He snorted in annoyance at her answer. He was battling anger and relief at having her back again. "Did you really have to drug me?"

Hicca paused in answering as a Scarred One rushed her. She stabbed the man in the heart before pulling her Ninjato free and delivering a spin kick to the man's face. With the man incapacitated she turned back around to look at Ash. "Well you were going to ruin my plan," she explained with a scowl.

Ash frowned before turning around and standing back to back with her as they waited for more attackers to charge. They worked well in synch, covering and defending each other from attacks and downing many of the remaining Scarred Ones.

"Did Siver do anything to you?" Ash asked not turning around.

"No," Hicca replied shortly. "Wellâ€|" she continued hesitantly.

"What happened?" Ash asked whirling around and looking at her with concern.

"Nothingâ€|he just kind of kissed me," Hicca admitted weakly.

Ash blinked in surprise at her answer. "WHAT!" he roared angrily. "He kissed you?!"

"Well it's not like I wanted him to. You think I wanted his lips on me and his tongue in my mouth," she said shuddering in disgust at the memory.

"HE STUCK HIS TONGUE IN YOUR MOUTH!?" Ash shouted.

Hicca was about to relay the terrible experience when a shout caught her attention. A Scarred One was charging her. She held her weapon at the ready, prepared to face the man. Meanwhile an internal maelstrom was brewing inside Ash the likes of which Viking kind had never seen. How dare Siver kiss his woman! How dare he put his hands on her! How

dare he stick his tongue into her mouth! Only his tongue belonged in there!

Ash needed to release his anger. But he wasn't in the forest. These poor men were about to be an outlet for his boiling protective Viking fury.

(Beast mode engaged)

As the man was about to attack Hicca with his sword Ash stepped in front of her and blocked with his own. With a shove he slashed the man across the side making him stumble back in pain. Then he stepped forward and with a spin cut the man's head off in one quick motion. It went sailing through the air as blood spurted out of his body.

A shout from Hicca right caught Ash's attention next and before Hicca could react he stepped in front of her at the ready. The man came at him with a sword and slashed at him from the left. Ash parried the blow and then stabbed the end of his sword into the man's left foot. The man howled in pain before Ash punched him across the jaw. Dazed, the man couldn't defend as Ash pulled his sword out of his foot and then kicked him hard in the chest, sending him tumbling backward in a heap.

Another shout got his attention. Turning around with a snarl on his face he saw a man rush at Hicca from behind. Taking the hilt of his sword in both hands he raised it above his head before throwing it at the man. The sword spun through the air before piercing the man's chest. He gaped wide eyed in shock before falling backward and dying.

Another man stepped around his dying comrade and attempted to get at Hicca once more. But Ash charged him and with a leap he cocked back his fist. The man was about to attack him when Ash swung his fist forward with all his strength. He broke the man's nose as his fist crashed into his face and immediately slammed the man to the floor with the force of his punch.

Hicca stood there wide eyed as Ash was taking out any man who came too close to her. Her heart fluttered at seeing Ash so protective. Suddenly a shout from behind caught her attention. She spun around just in time to see a man throwing a punch at her. Hicca was about to dodge the blow when an arm shot out over her left shoulder.

Ash had seen the man move to punch Hicca and surged forward. With his hand he stopped the man's attack in its tracks, much to the man's shock. The man stood there stunned that Ash could just stop his blow like that. He had to have at least a couple hundred pounds on the smaller man.

Ash then gently pushed Hicca behind him with his free hand. He glared daggers at the man. "Don't. Touch. My. Woman," he growled at the man lowly.

The man narrowed his eyes before throwing a jab at Ash's face with his other arm. He caught Ash across the jaw. But Ash only stumbled back a step before locking eyes with the man. Ash simply cracked his neck before stepping forward. "That all you got?" he asked challengingly.

The man growled before throwing a right cross that Ash simply blocked with his left hand before punching the man across the jaw with his right. The bigger man stumbled back and was spun by Ash's punch. He whirled around to face Ash once more and threw another punch. But Ash simply caught the man's fist once again with his right hand before punching him once more across the jaw with his left. The man stumbled back once more and spun away.

Turning back around to face Ash he was met with a jab to the nose that forced him back until he backed into a table. Getting frustrated he swung at Ash from the right. But Ash ducked and weaved in the opposite direction before punching the man in the stomach. The man doubled over in pain before Ash grabbed the man by the throat.

In a grunt of exertion Ash lifted the man off the ground with one arm, much to the bigger man's shock. The man was wide eyed as he felt himself being lifted off the ground before Ash slammed him through the table behind him with enough force to split it in two. The man groaned in pain before blacking out.

Hicca stood there, her face flushing red as she watched Ash slam a man at least twice his size through a table. She looked at his shoulders heaving as he came down from his berserker rage. She was wondering if it was wrong that the display of ultra-violence she just witnessed had just made her more attracted to Ash than she had ever been.

Suddenly Ash turned around and locked eyes with her. She stiffened in fright at his expression. He still looked pissed. Then he slowly stalked forward. While advancing he yanked his sword out from the Scarred One from Beofre's body.

Hicca backed away from Ash, unsure if he was suddenly going to turn his rage on her. She kept backing up until her backside bumped against a table. Then she just stood there, leaning back as Ash reached her. She remained motionless as she waited for Ash to do something.

Ash just held her gaze before sheathing his sword. Then he reached out and placed his left hand at the small of her back and his right hand behind her head and pulled her to him. He crashed his lips over hers in a fierce possessive kiss that made Hicca's knees weak.

She closed her eyes and moaned into the kiss as Ash moved his lips against hers and bent her over the table and held her close. When he stuck his tongue into her mouth she immediately forgot about the feeling of Siver's. This is what she'd hoped for. This felt right.

After a few moments Ash stood her up straight and pulled back. When he did her eyes were still half closed as she looked at him in adoration. She had a goofy grin on her face as Ash locked eyes with her.

"Only I'm kissing you from now on. Got it?" he said sharply. Hicca just nodded, still in a daze from the kiss.

"Ahem," came a deep voice.

The couple pulled apart and turned to look into the stern eyes of Stoick. "Oh. Hi daddy," Hicca said with a sheepish smile. She tried

to suppress her red face at having kissed Ash right in front of everyone.

"You're grounded," Stoick said gruffly.

Hicca's mouth dropped open. "Aww what? Why?"

"Because I said so," he growled out while turning to slash at a man.

"But I led us here," Hicca argued.

"Grounded!" was his response.

"Butâ€¦"

"Grounded!"

"Ugh fine," Hicca said with a defeated sigh. "Until when?"

"Until you're as old as Gothi," Stoick said while he continued to battle.

"But Gothi is ancient," she cried out indignantly. "I'll be dead before I can fly again," she protested.

"Then you better get used to walking," was Stoick's retort.
"Grounded!"

Hicca frowned at her grounding before a croon at her side caught her attention. She turned to see Toothless bounding up to her. When he reached her he immediately sniffed at her for injuries. "I'm fine hun," she said to reassure him. Toothless smiled at her in relief before licking her in the face. "Eww," she shrieked while wiping off her face.

Toothless just smiled at her. Glad to have his rider by his side.

All around the Hooligans were winning the battle. The twins fought together as Ruffnut hurled her shuriken at approaching enemies and then her brother finished them off with a stab from his spear.

However as one man charged him with a hatchet in hand Tuffnut decided to see if he'd mastered what Hicca had taught him. As the man came at him he threw his spear down. The man was surprised but didn't stop his charge.

As the man swung his hatchet at Tuffnut, Tuffnut ducked and punched him in the gut. As the man doubled over in pain Tuffnut grabbed his weapon arm with his left and twisted it back. The man cried out in pain as he dropped his weapon.

"DIM MAK!" Tuffnut shouted with a war cry. Then he rose slightly on his toes before swinging the side of his right fist directly over the man's heart at blinding speed with all his strength.

With a force equivalent to a war hammer he struck the man's chest. The force of his blow stopped the man's heart. With a gasp and

bugling eyes the man rocked backwards and crashed to the ground before going motionless.

Tuffnut stared wide eyed at the downed man before raising his fist up to his face. He looked at it in awe. "I did it," Tuffnut said in amazement. "I have master the death punch!"

He turned to look at his sister, whose eyes were wide in terror as she stared at his fist. Tuffnut smiled evilly before taking a step toward her. To his satisfaction she took a step back in fear. Tuffnut chuckled darkly. This was going to be fun.

Siver watched as his men were all being killed off by the Hooligans. He swept his eyes over the room before his gaze fell on her. As if sensing his gaze she looked up at him and locked eyes with him.

She glared at him coldly. Siver became numb to everything else around him as they continued to stare at each other. Then to his horror she took a step forward.

With a frightened cry he finally got his legs working. He turned and ran as fast as he could. Hicca narrowed her eyes and started to run after him before she felt a hand grip her arm. She turned around to look into the eyes of her father.

"Hiccaâ€¦you don't have to do this," he said.

Hicca smiled at his concern. "We're Haddocks dad. It's time we end this."

Stoick looked at his little girl with pride. "I'm proud to call you my daughter," he said earnestly. Then with a nod he let her hand go. "Go get him."

Hicca nodded. As she turned to run after him another hand gripped her arm. Suddenly she was spun around and pulled into a kiss from Ash. She closed her eyes for a moment to enjoy the kiss before Ash pulled back. She blushed and smiled up at him.

"Take him down babe," Ash said.

Hicca nodded. Ash released her and she dashed off. Whipping out her Kusarigama she flung the sickle end to the top of the balcony. As she had hoped the sickle hooked on the railing of the balcony, allowing her to climb up the chain. Leaving her weapon behind, she focused on her hearing and darted after the pounding footsteps of a retreating Siver.

She wasn't going to let him get away.

Ash and Stoick watched her run off. They smiled after her. They couldn't help but think what an amazing woman she was.

"You didn't tell her you loved her lad," Stoick pointed out.

Ash blinked in surprise. "Oh Thor damn it!" Ash cursed while smacking his forehead. Toothless chuckled beside him as he smacked Scarred Ones away with his tail. Ash faced forward and drew his weapon. He took in the remaining Scarred Ones and his eyes narrowed in determination.

He wanted to finish this as quickly as possible.

* * *

><p>Siver ran as fast as he could through the escape tunnel. He prayed that he'd gained a large enough lead to outrun the demon after him. That's what she had to be. She couldn't be human.<p>

After a few moments of running he could see a light up ahead. He breathed in relief as he saw his way out. The tunnel lead to an opening on the mountain side. It would put you directly on a cliff. While normally this would be a dead end he had made a rope bridge for an emergency escape. All he had to do was get to it, get across, and cut the end and she couldn't follow him.

Bursting into the daylight he smiled. He ran to the rope bridge at the end of the cliff side and was about to run across it when a sight froze him in his tracks. Ships. Lots of ships. And not his own.

He could make out the crests of the Hooligans, Loudmouths, Boneheads, and many other tribes from which he had captured families from. He could also make out dragons setting fire to his own ships as they tried to engage the approaching fleet.

It was over. The tribes had come and his men were no matched for their combined forces and their dragons. He'd lost.

He shook his head to clear his thoughts. It wasn't over. He could still get away like last time. He could rebuild. He could return. It might take some time but he did it once and he could do it again. He turned and started for the rope bridge when four silver flashes flew in front of him and sliced the ropes to the bridge.

"No!" he howled as the bridge fell away. He was trapped now. He couldn't get away. He turned to where the projectile had come from to find Stoick's daughter standing there. He glared at her, his fear replaced by fury.

"It's over Siver," she said firmly. "Your forces are finished. Surrender or die."

Siver glared at the woman. This Haddock. He knew it was over. But he was intent on taking her with him. He drew his hatchet and sword and stared her down. "I'd rather die," he spat at her.

The girl smiled. "I was kind of hoping you'd say that," she said as she drew the sword on her back. As Siver waited for an attack his mind flashed back to his battle with Stoick. It felt like he was facing him all over again as he looked into her eyes. The look she was giving him was just like Stoick's as she held her sword at her side.

Then she charged. She released a war cry as she ran towards him. Siver released a war cry of his own and rushed to meet her.

* * *

><p>Metal clanged against metal as Hicca and Siver battled. No of them could get in a killing blow however. Hicca was too fast and

agile as she spun, ducked, and weaved out of the way of Siver's attacks while parrying and slashing at him. Siver, having decades worth of fighting experience, was holding his own against her. Hicca could now see why Siver had been a match for her father. She was out of poisons, due to using them to wipe out many of the Scarred Ones she came across in the base. Her only remaining weapons were Ninjato and her kunai. The best she had been able to do so far was cut Siver. But the cuts were too shallow and not life threatening.<p>

Hicca jumped over a low swipe from his axe and then ducked a swing from his sword. She stabbed at him with her Ninjato but he stepped out of reach. His weapons were annoying. They gave him reach that her Ninjato didn't. She needed to get rid of one.

She saw her chance when Siver swung his axe down with his left hand. Hicca spun to the right before plunging her Ninjato into his bicep. He cried out in pain as he dropped his axe. Hicca quickly kicked the handle, causing it to spin away and over the edge of the cliff. Hicca's smile was cut short when Siver managed to grab her with his now free hand.

He lifted her into the air by her Shozoku before slamming her to the ground. Hicca landed on her back and wheezed as the air had been knocked out of her. She knew she would have bad bruising later on. But she didn't have time to dote on it as Siver lifted his foot up to crush her under his heel. Hicca quickly rolled to the side just as he stomped down on where her chest would have been. Drawing her kunai she stabbed him on the inside of both his thighs before leaping to her feet.

Siver grunted in pain from his two bleeding wounds and growled at Hicca. Planting his sword in the ground he pulled out her Ninjato still lodged in his arm. With a hiss he ripped it free and tossed it behind him and over the edge of the cliff. Then he picked up his sword and held it at the ready. Hicca crouched low and gripped the handle of her kunai firmly.

As they stared each other down Hicca began to steady her breathing and clear her mind. As Siver stepped forward and cocked back his arm to strike the world slowed down and Hicca prepared for his attack.

Going to swing from the right. Spin left and cut him above the eye. Hicca stepped back and spun to the left before lashing out with her knife and slicing Siver just above his right eye. Siver hissed and tried to wipe at the blood flowing from the cut. But a cut like that, while small, couldn't be stopped without proper medical treatment. And in a fight it could be a major hindrance. _Tap solar plexus_. Hicca charged and flipped the kunai in her hand over. Siver tried to swing at her as she got closer but was blinded by his blood leaking into his eye. He missed and Hicca drove the handle of her kunai into the vulnerable area. Siver gasped and wheezed as the air rushed out of his lungs. Hicca then tried to slash his throat and end the fight but he managed to jerk his head back. Then he swiped at her with his sword. Hicca managed to jump back in time to dodge it but the blade managed to knock her kunai out of her hand and over the cliff's edge.

Hicca cursed at becoming unarmed. Siver, having finally regained his breath, smiled evilly. Hicca dropped into a battle stance and raised

her hands. Siver let out a war cry and stepped forward to kill her. He swung wildly with his sword, hoping to cut her down. But with Hicca Dragon claws she was able to defend and dodge. The cut above his eyes also wasn't helping his aim. Still, even if she wasn't being cut the force from his swings was enough to drive her back and rattle her arms.

Hicca dodged a vertical slash when Siver took the hilt of his sword with both hands and swung at her horizontally. Hicca braced herself and planted her feet and raised both her arms to defend. With a loud clang she halted the blade but not without being pushed back dangerously close to the edge. Siver chuckled darkly and pressed harder against her. Hicca gritted her teeth as she tried to stop herself from being pushed off the edge of the cliff.

But she knew that with his superior size and strength she would go over eventually. She had to think of something. Fast.

Siver moved his face closer to hers and sneered at her. "Looks like I've won lass," he said. Hicca glared at him as her arms started to shake from holding back his sword. Every second that passed Hicca was being pushed closer and closer to the edge. She tried her best to push back but to no avail.

"By the way lass, do you know how I got these scars?" he asked in amusement.

Hicca looked into his face and an idea struck her. "Nope," she said curtly. She then took her left hand away from the blade and started reaching for her right dragon claw. She shift her arms slightly so the top of it was facing his face. "But I know how you got these," she said before activating the firing mechanism on her Dragon claw. The spikes along the top the fired at Siver without warning and buried themselves in his face. One even piercing his left eye.

He howled in pain and brought bot hands up to his face. But in doing so he dropped his sword. _Catch it, _Hicca thought to herself. With her mind and body in overdrive she caught the sword by the hilt before it touched the ground. _Use it against him_. Hicca released a grunt in exertion as she swung the sword diagonally across Siver's torso. He cried out and reeled back, trying to get away. But Hicca advanced and slashed him again in the other direction. Siver teetered dangerously close to the edge. With a final cry Hicca spun counter clockwise. Siver took his hands away from his face to look at her just in time to see her plunge his sword straight into his gut.

He fell to his knees and gasped in shock. He looked down too see the sword plunged almost all the way up to the hilt in his stomach. He coughed up blood as he felt himself grow weaker and cold. He lifted his head to meet Hicca's gaze.

Hicca glared at him. "You lose Siver," she said before she spun on her heel and kicked the end of the hilt deeper into Siver's chest.

Siver couldn't do anything as she drove his sword deeper into his body. With a gasp of air he rocked backwards and fell over the edge of the cliff.

Hicca smiled in satisfaction. She'd done it. She'd killed

him.

"Hicca!" came a shout from behind her. She turned to see her friends and father standing there. They gaped at her in shock and awe at having just witnessed her kill Siver. Hicca put her hands on her hip and smiled proudly. Then she sauntered over to them.

"DIE STOICK!" suddenly came a shout from behind her. Everyone's attention turned to behind Hicca. They couldn't believe it. It was Siver.

Siver had used the last of his strength to claw his way back up the cliffside. Running off willpower and pure hatred he knew he was done for. But he wouldn't go without at least killing one Haddock. In his hands was a crossbow. It had been on his back the entire time. He quickly loaded it before taking aim at Stoick. Even with only one eye his aim was true as he fired. Aiming right for Stoick's heart.

Stoick and everyone else was too surprised to move. The crossbow sailed through the air and was on a path right for Stoick's heart. He knew it was too late to avoid it. Just as it looked like it would find its mark a black blur jumped into its path.

It was Hicca. She hadn't even thought about it. Her body just reacted to save her father and thrown itself in the path of the crossbow bolt. It pierced her chainmail shirt under her Shozoku and buried itself into her left shoulder. She hit the floor due to its force and writhed in pain.

Siver cursed at her for getting in the way of his shot. Ruffnut narrowed her eyes at him and drew a shuriken. With precision aim she threw it and hit Siver in his remaining eye. He cried out in agony and once again fell back ward and over the edge.

Tunffnut and Snotlout ran over to see if he was gone for good while the other crouched down to help Hicca.

"Hicca are you ok?" Ash asked in panic.

Hicca hissed in pain and got her legs under her. "Yeah I'm ok," she said wincing in pain. Tried to reach her other hand over and pull the bolt out but moving hurt too much.

"I'll do it," her father said stepping forward. She nodded and grit her teeth in anticipation. Stoick placed a hand on the shaft of the bolt. "I'm sorry sweetie," he said earnestly. She nodded and held her breath. Stoick then yanked the bolt out. She cried out and cursed. Ruffnut produced a cloth from her pouch and placed it over the wound.

"Are you ok," Ash asked in concern.

Hicca looked up at him and smiled. "Yeah I'm ok. Sucks though. Gonna leave a scar," he said jokingly.

"Well I happen to think scar are sexy," Ash said with a shrug. Hicca smiled at him and chuckled. But her smile faded when the world began to become blurry. And it wasn't because of blood loss.

"Oh boy," she said aloud. The others looked at her in concern.
"Poison," she muttered aloud.

The others' eyes widened in surprise. "Chief, you need to take her back to Gothi's," Ash blurted out.

Stoick shook his head. "It'll be faster if you go. You're lighter than me. Take Toothless," he said.

Ash nodded before scooping Hicca up and mounting Toothless.

"We'll be right behind you. Go!" Stoick ordered while handing him the bolt.

Ash nodded and Toothless shot off. Heading for Berk as fast as he could.

Ash looked down at Hicca. She was staring at her hand and it was trembling. "Not good," she croaked out hoarsely.

He kept pressure on her wound and tried to give her a reassuring smile. "It's gonna be ok babe. Just hang on," he pleaded.

Hicca looked up at him and smiled. "It's alright Ash," she whispered with a small smile.

Ash smiled back and faced forward. "Come on Toothless. Faster," he urged the dragon. Toothless growled and picked up speed.

* * *

><p>Hours later they arrived at Berk. The sun had set already when they arrived. Ash landed near Gothi's hut and leapt out of the saddle with Hicca in his arms. He burst through the front door of Gothi's hut, startling the old woman who looked at him in annoyance.<p>

"Sorry elder. But Hicca had been poisoned. She needs treatment right away," he blurted out.

Gothi's eyes widened at his new and she pointed her staff at a cot. He nodded and laid Hicca down on the bed. He handed Gothi the bolt which she took. She took it in hand and wiped, sniffed, and licked the end. With her decades worth of medical knowledge she detected what the poison was and knew what she needed for an antidote.

Before she started to make it she looked over to inspect Hicca. She ushered Ash out of the room as she began to undress her so she could sew up her wound first.

Ash exited the hut and stood outside the door as Gothi got to work. He paced back and forth anxiously. Hoping that Hicca would be ok.

"Ash," came Gobber's voice as he hobbled up to him. He'd heard Toothless' signature call and saw them land at Gothi's. He assumed someone had been hurt and rushed over. Ash relayed all that had happened. Gobber took in the new and said a prayer for Hicca.

After an eternity of waiting Gothi came to the door. Both men looked

at her hopefully. But Gothi just casts her gaze down. Their stomach dropped and icy terror filled their veins. Gothi turned and usher them inside. She led them over to Hicca who was now wearing a clean plain white tunic. She went to Hicca's left side and gently lifted her wrist.

Then to the men's utter horror and disbelief she let it fall. They watched as it limply fell to her side and they understood Gothi's message.

Hicca was dead.

* * *

><p>New chapter

27. Bonus Chapter

****Bonus Chapter****

A red blur ran through the dark forest as fast as it could. The red blur was a man. He was a ninja. A Jonin of the Blood Scorpion clan. As he ran through the forest he kept glancing over his shoulder. He was running as if death itself was on his heels. And it might as well have been. He'd been at his unit's sub hideout minding his own business when they were attacked.

In just a few minutes over one hundred of his comrades were wiped out. He couldn't believe it. Especially because only one person had assaulted their base. They'd gotten passed all the traps, slaughtered countless guards and sentries, and drove their way into the deepest part of the hideout. But it all made sense when he saw who it was.

It was her.

Her icy blue eyes revealed her identity.

He had frozen in terror. His younger comrades had been foolish enough to rush at her in an attempt to kill her. It was suicide. Everyone knew what to do when you found yourself faced against that monster. You run. You run and pray she isn't in the mood for blood. And you keep running. When you felt you couldn't run anymore you kept on going and didn't look back.

The young ninja had been doing that for hours. He had no idea how far or how long he'd been running. He didn't care. That person was death itself. She was a monster. He'd heard that she'd been wiping out the sub hideouts of his clan for a few weeks now. But he never thought she'd find his base.

Panting in exhaustion the young ninja stopped running and leaned back against a tree. He placed a hand over his chest in an attempt to settle his racing heart. He'd been so lucky to get away. She'd been killing off his comrades when he bolted.

Finally settling down after taking many deep breaths he focused on his hearing. He strained it to its limits as he listened for any sign that she'd been following him. He peeked out from behind his tree. He

peered into the darkness cautiously. But he saw nothing. He heard nothing either. He released a breath in relief. He'd done it. He'd outrun death itself.

He started to laugh in joy that he was still alive. Then a sharp pain flooded his senses and he cried out in agony. He looked over to his right shoulder to see that a black arrow had pierced it. His stomach dropped to his feet and his blood turned to ice. He'd been wrong. She was still after him. She'd found him.

He tried to get up and run away but the arrow had gone right through his shoulder and dug into the tree, holding him in place. As he was about to reach his left hand over to attempt to pull it free he screamed in pain as it was pierced with an arrow. Then his right hand was pierced followed by his thighs.

He cried out as he attempted to pull himself from the tree. He had to get away. She would kill him.

He closed his eyes and winced in pain as he tried to pull himself free. Just as he moved an inch his head was slammed back against the tree. He opened his eyes and gazed into the icy blue eyes of death.

"Hello bug," the monster said. She had her hand around his throat and kept him pinned against the tree. His body became drenched in cold sweat. It was over for him.

"You didn't actually think I'd let you get away now did you?" the kunoichi said with a dark hint of amusement. She wore a black Shozoku, indicating which clan she belonged to. The clan of his clan's sworn enemies. The Shadow Dragon clan.

"Now. Tell me where he is," the kunoichi demanded. He remained silent. She tightened her grip on his throat. "Tell me," she demanded more harshly. He remained silent.

She sighed in annoyance at his tenacity. "You Scorpions. You're such pests," she said as she reached a hand out and grabbed at one of the arrows. "You're more like roaches if you ask me. No matter how many of you I kill, there seems to always be more," she hissed as she began to jerk the arrow in his shoulder around. He cried out in pain and she punched him across the jaw to silence him. "Oh shut up."

"I don't know," the Scorpion Jonin said. "I have no idea where he is." He watched as she looked into his eyes. She was probably looking for any sign of deception. He honestly didn't know where her target was.

She let go of him and stepped back. He watched her anxiously, waiting for her to do anything. "Here's the deal bug. I believe you, but this scenario doesn't end with you walking away alive. But I'm going to give you two options," she said holding up two fingers. "Option one: where the location of your closest base is and I slit your throat. Option two: you don't tell me or try and lie to me," she paused and pulled out a kunai. "Well, let's just say I can do this all night," she said darkly.

He gulped nervously. He considered his options. A slit throat wasn't

the best or nicest way to go. But it was probably considerably better than what else she could do to him. He swallowed a lump in his throat.

"North of here. At the base of the mountain near a lake,"* he informed her. He watched as she narrowed her eyes at him.

"Ok bug. Thank you for the information,"* she said. Then she stepped forward and stabbed him in the throat. His eyes bulged out of his head as he dragged it across and tore it out the other side. She didn't even bother to watch him die as she wiped the blood off her knife and walked away.

The kunoichi had been hunting her target for some time now. But the bastard was slippery. She'd already destroyed and wiped out 10 sub bases of the Blood Scorpion clan. It was getting boring.

She whistled into the night. A few moments later a brown horse trotted up to her. She rubbed its nose before mounting it and directing it northward.

As she headed for her destination she looked up at the sky and sighed. She missed Hicca. This would be considerably more bearable if she had been with her. But no, the little ray of sunshine in her life had gone home.

Oh how she missed her.

"I hope you're ok Hicca. I really miss you," she said wistfully into the wind.

With that she faced forward and poked her heels into the horse's side. It picked up its pace and she focused on her mission.

She had a head to collect.

* * *

><p>Oh man I am the worst kind of person. I bet you're all wondering what the hell happened to Hicca? Well i'm stalling. Oh the suspense! Is she alive? Is she dead? Find out whenever i feel like releasing the next chapter.

**P.S. If there are any artists reading my story. I'd love to see some concept art of Kunoichi Hicca. Alas i am not a artist. If you do it i'll write a bonus chapter just for you. Just tell me what you want to happen and if we can agree i'll add it in. **

28. Chapter 27

A Chance

Gothi's hut was silent save for the muffled sobs and sniffs of its occupants. Hours after Ash had arrived the chief and the riders did so as well. Gobber and Ash waited outside of Gothi's hut to deliver the grim news. Stoick and the riders landed near Gothi's hut before immediately jumping off their dragon and sprinting up to Ash and Gobber.

Stoick was ahead of the others as he came up to Ash and Gobber. His look begging for answers. He wanted to hear good news. His stomach dripped when he saw Ash and Gobber exchange a sad glance. Then Ash dropped his gaze, unable to meet the chief's eyes. Ash couldn't say it. So with tears in his eyes, and a broken heart Gobber had to tell his longtime friend the terrible news.

When Stoick processed his friend's words he didn't react. He simply stepped past the men and into the hut. Like a zombie he walked in and took in the black shape of his daughter's dragon near a cot. Looking closely he could make out a small unmoving figure laying on it. He approached slowly, his feet suddenly like weights. He didn't even breathe as he made his way over to the cot.

Only to look down at the form of his lifeless child.

He just stood there. Not wanting to believe it. But he saw it. She wasn't moving. She wasn't even breathing. He reached out a trembling hand to caress her face. Praying to every god and power that she would move. That her eyelids would flutter or she would just respond.

His heart broke when she didn't.

The others watched, trying to hold back tears as the chief stood by his child. Tears began to form in the riders eyes. They couldn't believe it. Their friend was gone.

Ash felt the hot tears blurring his vision and escape his eyes. He didn't bother to wipe them away. He didn't have the strength to do anything but stand there. She was gone.

It just didn't seem fair. She'd come back into his life after six long years of waiting only to be taken from him. And he'd only had a few months with her. He'd wanted so much more. He had wanted to experience so many things with her. Marriage, children, getting old together. But now he would never have it.

The only thing that hurt worse was that he hadn't even told her he loved her.

And now he never would.

Stoick cradled Hicca against his chest. His daughter, his own flesh and blood, gone. And it had all been to save him. Him, the man who'd cast her out. The man who'd been the worst father in the world.

How could he live with himself?

He looked down into his child's face. She looked so peaceful. Like she would wake up anytime soon. Tears were suddenly on her face. That's when he realized he'd begun to cry. Normally Stoick would never shed tears. But he didn't care. He let them fall as the waves of sorrow and anguish washed over him.

"I'm sorry Stoick," came Gobber's solemn voice behind him.

Stoick didn't turn around. He just kept holding Hicca to him as his massive shoulder began to shake with sobs. "She did it to save me Gobber," he choked out. "I wish that bolt had killed me," he

whispered out miserably.

"Don't say that Stoick. She did it because she loved you," Gobber offered

But it didn't do anything to curb his grief. "You're going to have to bury me Gobber," Stoick muttered.

Gobber's heart broke. Stoick had already been so much. He'd lost so many precious people in his life. It was a miracle he'd kept going all these years. But this, this might have been the thing to finally break him.

Gobber slowly reached out his hand and placed it on his friend's shoulder. Trying to offer what comfort he could. Meanwhile, Gothi came up and gave the chief an apologetic smile. But she ushered him to step back so she could cover the body.

Stoick reluctantly did. It took everything in him to let her body go. It took even more to take a step back. He watched as Gothi placed a light sheet over his little girl. He felt a piece of himself die.

Toothless, who was at the opposite side of the cot from Stoick, had his head on the bed near her hand. When the elder placed a sheet over her body he grumbled before taking it in his mouth and pulling it off her. He didn't want her to be too hot.

Gothi frowned before trying again. But once again Toothless removed the blanket. After a few more tries she gave up.

"We'll give her a proper funeral Stoick," Gobber said speaking up. "We'll make sure she gets the honor she deserves. We'll send her out to sea and light her way to Valhalla with fire."

Suddenly Toothless flared his wings open and roared. This shocked everyone one in the room as he stood protectively over Hicca's body and bared his fangs at Gobber. Gobber hadn't know what he'd done.

"She gone Toothless," Ash said stepping forward. "She's gone and we're going to honor her the proper way. The Viking way," he tried to tell the dragon. Toothless continued to growl and loom over Hicca. Ash tried to reach a hand out to comfort him when Toothless snapped his teeth at it, narrowly missing taking a few fingers.

"Toothless!" Ash yelled after making sure his hand was ok. He narrowed his eyes at the dragon. Why was he so against this? As he was about to take a step forward Toothless opened his mouth and Ash froze. He could see the faint blue glow at the back of his throat, a warning to stay back or else. Ash raised his hands up in surrender before backing away.

When he'd backed up a sufficient distance Toothless settled down. He rested his head on the bed once again near Hicca's left hand and cooed softly at her.

The others exchanged confused glances. How were they going to get Hicca's body away from him? And why was he being so protective of it? Did he not understand?

Gothi cocked an eyebrow at the Night Fury's behavior. It was one of the smartest dragon they'd ever encountered. Surely it could comprehend death. But something nagged at Gothi's mind. Slowly she stepped forward. Using her staff she moved Stoick and Gobber out of her way as she came to Hicca's right side. She looked cautiously at Toothless and saw he was ignoring her. She put her fingers on Hicca's neck to feel for a pulse and felt nothing. Then she grabbed Hicca's wrist and still felt no pulse. Pursing her lips in thought she rose on her tip toes and rested her head against Hicca's chest.

She didn't hear anything. But something made her wait.

THUMP

Gothi's eyes widened in surprise. That couldn't be right. She kept her ear against Hicca's chest and waited. She didn't hear anything. She frowned but remained still. Straining to hear anything.

THUMP

Now she was sure. She waited again. And though it seemed to take forever she heard the noise again. Hobbling to part of her hut where there was dirt to draw she began to scribble with her staff. Everyone in the room gathered around her and looked at her scribbles curiously.

"What she saying Gobber?" Stoick asked.

Gobber narrowed his eyes as he waited for Gothi to finish. And when she did what he interpreted made his eyes widen in disbelief.

"Gobber?" Stoick asked again.

"According to Gothi Hicca is alive," he breathed out. The others all gaped in shock.

"But how?" Stoick began before Gothi knocked him in the head with his staff. He looked down at the elder who was scowling up at him. Then she started to draw in the dirt again.

"Gothi says she was wrong," Gobber explained. "She thought Hicca's heart wasn't beating but the truth is it's just beating very slowly," he revealed. "Her vitals are at a crawl."

Stoick almost couldn't believe it. He glanced over at Hicca's body. "But she isn't breathing," he said.

Gobber scratched his chin in thought. "Dagger," he said holding out a hand. Ruffnut placed one in it. Slowly he hobbled over to Hicca. Then he placed the blade of the dagger underneath her nose. After a moment he brought it up to his face.

The others watched curiously. Then suddenly he began to chuckle. Then it turned into an uproar of delighted laughter. "OH THOR ALMIGHTY!" he bellowed out. He turned around and looked at the others. "Come take a look at this," he said while offering the dagger to them. The

all came forward to examine it. And they saw what he meant. Moisture. A slight amount of condensation had formed on the blade. And that could only mean one thing. Hicca was breathing.

"But how?" Ash asked.

Once again Gothi began drawing in the dirt. Gobber walked over to translate. "Gothi says that with her heart beating so slowly she doesn't need to take in as much air. That why we can't see her chest moving."

"But why is she like this? Will she be ok?" Ruffnut asked. They all exchanged glances.

"THAT MAKES SENSE!" someone in the room called out. Everyone looked over in surprise to find that it was Snotlout. He nodded enthusiastically, though no one else seem to get what he meant.

"He's right," Fishlegs suddenly piped in. They all looked to him as his eyes were wide in realization. "Think about it. When you're bitten by a snake on your arm and not near any healer's hut, what can you do?" he asked aloud.

"You'd wrap it up tightly to slow the poison down," Snotlout surprisingly answered.

Fishlegs nodded in agreement. "Right. But the spot where Hicca was shot makes it hard to do that. She had no idea if she'll make it to Berk so what does she do?" he asked. "She slows down her heart to slow down the poison rushing through her veins," he finished excitedly.

"Hicca told me that ninja can enter a meditative state so deep that they can slow down their hearts. This is what she's doing now," Snotlout explained. "She can still make it," he yelled out.

The other all smiled in happiness. This was excellent news. The twins banged their helmets together in happiness while Ash beamed. He looked at his girlfriend. His oh so clever girlfriend and smiled.

"We'd better give her that antidote," Gobber told Stoick. He nodded in agreement before looking to the elder. She nodded before getting to work. Within a few minutes she prepared and administered the antidote. They gathers around Hicca and looked at her expectantly. To their disappointment, she didn't move.

"Why isn't this working?" Stoick cried out in frustration.

Gothi began to draw in the dirt. "Gothi says that the poison has been in her system for some time. There is still a chance she won't make it. All we can do is wait," Gobber revealed.

Stoick's shoulder sagged in response. There was still a chance he could lose her.

"Don't you worry Stoick. That girl is as tough as nails. She'll pull through," Gobber said confidently.

Stoick shook himself from his pessimism. He was right. Hicca was a fighter. Always had been. He had to have faith in her.

"We'll take shifts watching her. I'll go first," he said firmly. The others nodded and turned to leave. They were exhausted. All save Ash. He was hesitant to leave. He wanted to stay by her side. Stoick walked over and placed a hand on his shoulder. "Go home lad. Get some rest. She'll be here," he told him.

Ash looked up at his chief and remained still. But he relented with a nod. He spared on last glance at Hicca before turning and walking away.

Stoick pulled up a chair and sat beside Hicca's cot. Gothi went about her business, content to let the chief wait.

Stoick looked at his little girl. She was fighting for her life. He prayed that she would wake up. He had so much to tell her.

* * *

><p>New chapter. Sorry for the suspense. But there you go.

29. Bonus Chapter 2

****Bonus Chapter 2****

Kagome, a kunoichi of the Blood Scorpion clan was sitting with her husband and lover, Hotaru, as they announced her pregnancy. All around their comrades cheered and congratulated them excitedly. She was very happy. The Blood Scorpion clan didn't have very many kunoichi. She was one of the few, though she was mainly just a medic. Her clan was very hated among the other clans for their reputation. For they were one of the most underhanded and dishonorable clans among them.

But there were a few people like her and her husband and her friends in their sub base that were good people. Who cared about people and looked out for each other. No matter what people would say about her clan, she loved her friends.

She glanced over at her husband and smiled. She was excited to start a family with him. She was excited to be carrying his child. She loved him so much.

Suddenly one of their comrades burst into the room. His face was in a panic. They all looked at him in concern.

"It's her," he said in dread. "She found us."

Everyone's eyes widened in fear. They knew who he was speaking about. The kunoichi from the Shadow Dragon clan who'd been mercilessly hunting them down. They thought they were safe. But now she was here. Kagome placed her hands over her stomach protectively. What would happen to her baby?

Hotaru, the highest ranking ninja in the base started issuing orders. He ordered everyone to begin evacuating the lower levels of the base.

But their comrade informed them that everyone was already dead. She'd killed them all and was on her way up to them as they spoke. Hotaru cursed. He grabbed Kagome's hand and led her to the door in the back. He slid it open and ordered her to run. To get out and save herself.

He gulped nervously and said he would try to slow her down. Kagome paled. She didn't want to lose him. And she knew the reputation of the icy eyed kunoichi. She tried to protest but he pushed her along and ordered her more firmly to run.

With a bit of hesitancy she complied. She ran through the tunnels of their base as fast as she could. But she suddenly stopped when she heard screaming. Followed by the clanging of metal on metal. She turned around and listened to the sound of a struggle. Then ice filled her veins as she heard the pained cried of her beloved.

She ran back to him. She had to help. It was suddenly silent as she reached to doors of the room she'd just been. The door was open just a crack so she peeked in.

She suppressed a gasp at what she saw. Everyone in the room was dead. Slaughtered. Their bodies were strewn everywhere. She suppressed sobs at seeing her comrades' state.

But then her horror grew at what she noticed next.

It was _her._

She had her beloved wrapped up in chains and on his knees as her hand was around his throat. He was bleeding from a gash on his head and his face was swollen and bruised. She remained silent and watched as he was being interrogated.

"Where is he?" the icy eyed kunoichi asked. Her husband remained silent and glared up at her. At his lack of cooperation she punched him across the face, hard. Kagome winced.

"Where is he bug?" she demanded again. Hotaru kept silent. With a growl she kneed him in the nose before throwing him to the ground. Then she reached a hand up to the sword on her back.

"NO!" Kagome cried out as she opened the door and revealed herself. She shook as the other kunoichi turned her icy gaze to her. Hotaru cried out in fear for her life. He urged her to run but she wouldn't leave him.

"Well, well. What do we have here?" the other kunoichi said taking Kagome in. "A female Scorpion. How rare," she said in surprise.

Kagome took a breath before drawing her kunai. She wouldn't just sit back and let her beloved die. She was a ninja too after all.

"Wanna fight me then girl?" the other kunoichi said in amusement. She didn't even draw her sword as she turned to fully face Kagome. "Come on then," she said in challenge.

Kagome narrowed her eyes before charging her.

A few minutes later Kagome was on the ground as he icy eyed kunoichi sat on her chest. Her arms were at her sides, paralyzed from her opponent's nerve strikes. She hadn't even come close to touching her. This had been a mistake. Now she was going to die and lose the baby.

"Well that was boring,"* the kunoichi on her chest said. She glared down at the girl and glanced between her and who she guessed was her lover. She needed answers. But ninja were stubborn. They were trained to tolerate pain, making torture and interrogation arduous and slow. But love she could exploit.

"Well girl, I have good news and bad news,"* she told Kagome. Kagome looked up at her in fear. "The good news is I'm not going to kill you. I don't like killing women and you remind me of someone I know,"* she explained. Then she narrowed her eyes and her face went stern. She sighed and looked into Kagome's eyes. "But the bad news is I still need answers. So this is going to be very painful unless I get some,"* she said looking to Hotaru. He watched helplessly as the black kunoichi raised her right hand.

Then she swiftly slapped Kagome across the face, hard. Kagome cried out in pain just as was backhanded. The black kunoichi kept her gaze on Hotaru as she kept slapping his wife across the face. Every slap made his heart clench. He wanted to stop it but it would be betraying his clan.

Kagome's cheeks stung and she began tasting blood in her mouth as the black kunoichi kept increasing the force of her slaps. She looked up to see the dark cold eyes of the other female gazing at Hotaru. She was making it clear that only he could stop this.

After a few minutes of no progress the black kunoichi sighed and stopped. "Ok let's try a different tactic,"* she said. She rose up off Kagome, who was whimpering in pain a crying. But she was a ninja too. She could take this. Then she cried out as the other girl grabbed her by her hair and started dragging her across the floor. She dragged her over to a water barrel before lifting her to her feet.

She knocked off the top and glanced at Hotaru. "Talk,"* she demanded. Hotaru remained silent. She narrowed her eyes at him before slamming Kagome's head into the side of the barrel. She cried out before she was yanked up and ducked into the barrel. The black kunoichi kept a hard glare on Hotaru as Kagome thrashed in her grip.

Kagome's lungs were burning at the lack of air. She was sure she would drown before the black kunoichi lifted her out of the water. "I don't suppose you know where my target is?"* she asked her. Kagome remained silent. She didn't know. The black kunoichi took her silence as an answer and sighed before dunking her back in the water.

Hotaru thrashed against his bonds, desperate to get to Kagome. He cried out to her and begged the black kunoichi to hurt him instead. But his words fell on deaf ears. Out of patience she threw Kagome to the ground. Kagome coughed and whimpered in pain as she looked up at the other girl.

The other girl suddenly lashed out and tried to kick her in the stomach. But Kagome, spurred by the desire to protect the life inside her twisted so that she received the kick in the side. The black kunoichi noticed this and experimentally kicked at her again, aiming for her stomach. Once again the girl managed to move so that she wasn't kicked in the stomach.

The black kunoichi glanced between Hotaru and Kagome. *"Ohhhh. I see what's up,"* she said. *"We have a little pork bun in the oven."*

Hotaru's face paled. Kagome quivered in fear. The way the woman said it was dark.

The black kunoichi came over to Kagome and grabbed her by the head once again. She cried out as the girl lifted her up onto her knees. Then she drew the sword on her back. *"New deal. Tell me where he is or I'll kill her and what I assume is your child,"* she demanded. The couples' faces paled, but they remained silent. Kagome out of ignorance and fear and Hotaru out of loyalty.

Suddenly the black kunoichi threw Kagome to the ground violently. Landing on her side she cried out as the other woman pressed down on her head with her heel. The black kunoichi looked at Hotaru and raised her sword above her head. Positioning herself so that the sword would cut off Kagome's head if she slashed downward.

"You have until the count of five," she warned. Hotaru remained silent as he looked into the distraught face of his wife. She was crying out in anguish, but not for herself. For her child. She cried for Hotaru to help her. He thrashed and squirmed against his chains, trying to get free. *"Oneâ€|twoâ€|threeâ€|four,"* the kunoichi said. She locked eyes with Hotaru. *"Five,"* she said as she swung her blade down.

"Wait!" Hotaru cried out in defeat. The kunoichi halted her blade just a few centimeters from Kagome's neck. *"The base in the southern province. That's where he is. Near Mount Hebi. I swear. Just don't kill her,"* he begged. The kunoichi narrowed her eyes at him. But then she sheathed her sword and stepped off Kagome.

He watched as she walked over to him. Grabbing him by his Shozoku she lifted him up and onto his knees and turned her ice cold stared into his eyes. *"Are you lying to me?"* she asked.

He shook his head frantically. *"No. I swear I'm not. That's where I heard he was,"* he said honestly. The kunoichi searched his face for the truth. "Good," she said. Hotaru breathed a sigh of relief. *"Looks like your baby gets to be born,"* she said as she moved her hand to the side of his head. He remained frozen as her hands moved. *"Too bad you won't be there to see it,"* she said darkly.

"Wait!" Kagome suddenly cried. The black kunoichi turned her gaze to Kagome. "We told you what you want to know. So please just let him live," she pleaded through tears. Kagome watched as the kunoichi remained motionless. It seemed as if she was considering accepting her suggestion.

Then suddenly, and keeping her gaze trained on Kagome she twisted her husband's head to the right violently. A sharp crack was heard before

she let her husband fall to his side and remain still. Kagome cried out in anguish and crawled over to him. She managed to reach his body and cradled his head in her arms. She rocked back and forth and cried out in a guttural scream of grief and despair.

She turned to look at the black kunoichi only to watch her walk away. How could she be so heartless? She hadn't even batted an eye when she'd killed him.

"Why?" was all she could ask.

The black kunoichi stopped.

"Because you're my enemies. I need no other reason," was all she said. With that she continued walking. Leaving behind a sobbing widow. There was no compassion or remorse in her heart. Only slight guilt at having left a child without a father. She knew what that was like. But the child would have a mother.

That would have to be enough.

* * *

><p>Another bonus chapter. Hope its entertaining.

30. Chapter 28

****Apologies and Reasons****

Stoick sat in his chair beside Hicca as she remained motionless. He kept his gaze on her and occasionally would listen for a heartbeat to ensure she was still alive. The big man was scared. He could still lose her. But he was trying his best to have faith.

"I know you'll pull through Hicca," he said aloud. He was saying it mostly to and for himself. "You're tough and strong. Just like you're old man," he said with a chuckle.

He gazed at her face. She looked so peaceful. He released a heavy sigh. "And I'm sorry I never realized that before," he said with regret evident in his voice. He swallowed a lump in his throat and took a breath through the nose. Stoick had never been a man of many words, but he may not get another chance to speak.

"Losing your mother was one of the most painful things that ever happened to me," he said sorrowfully. "And I wanted to never lose you too. So I hoped that you'd grow up to be big and strong so something like that could never happen," he explained. "But instead you turned out small, frail, and were you so strange. I didn't know what to do with you," he said as he remembered her growing up.

"I tried to protect you in my own way. I tried to keep you out of the fighting. But you were just so stubborn. And I didn't have the patience to deal with your strangeness. So I focused all my energy on being your chief, when what you really needed was a father," he said sadly.

"When you left and disappeared for those six years it was the

loneliest and saddest years of my entire life. I prayed to the gods that you'd come back. And you did," he said with a small smile. "And then I saw that I was wrong about you. You became strong all on your own. Albeit in a different and strange kind of way. But that only showed me how much I had my head up my arse. If I'd been more understanding, more patient, I could have helped you turn into the woman you are now."

He glanced down at his daughter's face. He reached his hand out to caress her cheek. Tears of regret started to cloud his vision.

"I'm so sorry for everything Hicca. Please don't leave me," he begged. "I don't care that you're small, or strange, or sarcastic. I only care that you're mine," he said as his voice cracked.

"I love you," he whispered to her.

He sent a prayer to the gods. He begged them to not take her. He begged them to let him have as many years as he could with her. He'd already missed so much. He swore that he'd never miss another minute.

* * *

><p>After a few hours Fishlegs came to relieve the chief. He reluctantly left his post to get some rest. He desperately needed it. As Fishlegs sat by Hicca's side he thought back to all the years he'd known her. And guilt stabbed him in the heart.<p>

"Hey Hiccaâ€¦it's meâ€¦Fishlegs," he said weakly. He fidgeted nervously as he tried to find the right words to say. "I just wanted to say thatâ€¦wellâ€¦I know I never really bullied you when we were kids, but I didn't do anything to stop it either," he said in shame. "So I wanted to say I'm sorry."

"I knew it was wrong and yet I just sat there and didn't say anything. I felt that if I didâ€¦well I would get bullied too," he revealed. "Buts that's no excuse," he said firmly. He was just as bad as the others. He wasn't going to hold himself above them and claim no responsibility.

"So please wake up. I want to be your friend and make it up to you," he muttered quietly.

With that he settled down to watch over her. He hoped she would wake up. He didn't want to lose such a great friend.

* * *

><p>"Hey cuz, Snotlout here," Snotlout said at Hicca's side. He'd come to relive Fishlegs. He glanced behind him to make sure he was gone. Then he looked at the elder to see if she was sleeping. She was.<p>

Rubbing the back of his neck awkwardly he bent down to whisper to Hicca's body. "Ok Hicca. I'm not saying this out of guilt or anything, but the reason I was such a jerk to you when we were kids is becauseâ€¦" he paused to take a breath. "Wellâ€¦it's because you would have been a better chief than me," he finally said.

"Sure I was always stronger, more athletic, better looking," he said as he started to rant about himself. Then he shook his head to get back on track. "But you were always smarter and cleverer. I could always see that. And it made me angry to think that you, the worst excuse for a Viking, were my competition," he said with a sigh.

"So I would bully you to try and put you down. So you wouldn't see what I saw. But it never really mattered," he said with a sad chuckle. "In the end the village chose Ash to be the next chief. And you know what?" he asked aloud. "He's just the better man for the job."

"Just like you would have been. So you knowâ€¦wake up. So I can be a better cousin to you," he said to her.

"And I'll deny this conversation ever happened by the way," he whispered to her softly.

* * *

><p>"Hey Hicca, its Ruffnut," the blond girl said.<p>

"I'm sorry about the way I treated you when we were kids. It's just that growing up with a brother and whole bunch of guysâ€¦it made me think I needed to be all tough and stuff," Ruffnut explained. "And then there was you. You were so girly and frail. I guess I got a little jealous. So I joined in on the bullying when we should have stuck together," she said ashamed.

"Then you came back all awesome. Man I really wanted to be your friend. And well I think that maybe we were starting to get there," she said hopefully. "So you know. Wake up. Don't leave me with all these stupid men again."

* * *

><p>"So then I was all like 'DIM MAK'!" Tuffnut said enthusiastically as he recounted the battle with the Scarred Ones. "And he went down in one hit. Then more people came at me and I was all like 'DIM MAK', 'DIM MAK', 'DIM MAK'," he said proudly. "I totally mastered that move."<p>

He looked down into Hicca's form and then rubbed the back of his head awkwardly. "Oh and I guess I'm sorry for being a jerk and stuff. I'll try to be a better person from now on if you wake up," he said in earnest.

* * *

><p>Ash was the last person to take the shift. Having relive Tuffnut he took the chair by Hicca's side. He glanced over at Toothless who was still resting his head near her hand on the opposite side of the bed. He smiled at the dragon's loyalty.<p>

He glanced down at Hicca's form. Slowly he reached out and took her hand in his. He trailed his thumb over the back of hers and sighed. Her hand was so small. And yet it was somehow a perfect match with his. In his opinion at least.

"I love you Hicca," Ash finally said. "For six whole years I've loved

you."

He gazed into her face. He released a disappointed breath that she wasn't awake to hear this. But he was going to tell her now. "I'm sorry I've been such a coward. I'm sorry I didn't say it the moment you came back. But I'm not afraid to say it now," he said firmly.

"But now I'm gonna tell you the reason," he began. He paused to take a breath and steel himself. "It's because you madeâ€"no, you make me a better person," he revealed.

He sighed as he took another breath. "Before you came alongâ€"I didn't care about this village," he explained. "Well, I did, as a whole. But I didn't care about the people in it. Our friends for example. Just obstacles," he amended. "I was obsessed with being the best. I wanted to be the greatest dragon killer Berk had ever seenâ€"but then there was you."

"The worst Viking ever," he said with a chuckle. "And yet you wanted to be so much like us. But then you went and befriended our worst enemy. You were willing to protect him even against your own people."

"And that's when you changed me. You showed me that there were more important things than blind ambition. You showed me how important people or 'thing'," he said looking to Toothless. "Could be."

He raised Hicca hand to his forehead. Then he lowered it to kiss her knuckles. "My entire life I wanted to be the best Viking I could be. But you made me a better man," he whispered softly.

"So please come back Hicca. I need you to keep making me better. I don't want to be that kid anymore," he choked out. Tears began to form in his eyes.

"There still so much I wanna know about you. What's your favorite fish? Is green your favorite color? I'm dying to know. But I need you to come back," he pleaded.

Please come back babe.

* * *

><p>Sunlight began to stream in through the cracks of Gothi's hut. The room became illuminated by the light, stirring a sleeping Viking from his slumber. Ash's eyes fluttered open. He hadn't realized he'd fallen asleep. He mentally scolded himself for doing that.<p>

He sat up in his chair and stretched his muscles while releasing a yawn. Then he glanced down at the bed. His eyes widened at what he saw. He stood up so fast that the chair was knocked over beneath him.

It was Hicca. Or more precisely the lack of Hicca. She was gone. As was Toothless.

Ash began to grow panicked as he darted his head to and fro in attempt to find her. But he didn't see her anywhere.

He whirled around and bolted to the door.

Where was she?

31. Chapter 29

****Awake****

Ash burst out of Gothi's hut and nearly collided with the chief. The chief looked down at him surprise and noticed his look of panic.

"Ash, what's wrong lad?" he asked in concern.

"Hicca is gone! I fell asleep last night and when I woke up she and Toothless were gone," he blurted out.

Stoick's eyes widened in surprise. He turned around to the riders who'd been trailing behind him and issued orders. "Spread out and started searching the village and then the island." They nodded before taking off. Ash stepped around Stoick and joined them.

For the next twenty minutes they ran throughout the village looking for Hicca. They searched everywhere for her while shouting out her name. They even asked other villagers if they'd seen her and got them to assist in the search. Eventually everyone was looking for her.

Stoick came to the plaza as the other riders and Gobber did.

"Anyone find her?" he asked.

They all shook their head. He cursed. "Ok get your dragon and start searching the island from the sky. Find her," he ordered. He wanted her found. Why would she just disappear? Was she ok? His heart turned to ice as he wondered if she'd left them.

"Stoick look," Gobber suddenly cried. Stoick looked to Gobber and saw him pointing with his hand at a feeding station. Stoick followed his finger and made out the black shape of Toothless.

"Toothless!" Stoick cried out as he ran up to the dragon. The dragon gobbled down a salmon before looking up. When Stoick reached him he let out a breath in relief. Toothless being her meant Hicca was still somewhere on the island. "Where is Hicca Toothless?"

The dragon cocked his head to the side and his earflaps twitched at his rider's name. He was confused by the note of panic in the big man's voice.

"Please Toothless," Stoick urged. The dragon remained still for a moment. Then it simply turned his head and gazed off into the distance. Stoick was confused for a moment before he followed Toothless' gaze. He followed it up to the village's watch tower. The sun was rising in that direction and Stoick had to squint to look up there. But he could just make out a tiny figure silhouetted against the sun.

"Hicca," he breathed out. Then he pelted off toward the tower as fast

as he could. The others were about to run after him when Gobber raised a hand up to stop them.

"Easy there lads and lass. Let the chief and Hicca have a moment," he said wisely.

The others complied. Settling back to give them a moment. But they weren't going to wait for very long.

* * *

><p>Stoick sprinted madly up the spiraling wooden path to the top of the watch tower. He prayed to the gods that Hicca was there. He prayed for them to let her be ok. When he reached the top he was out of breath and panting. But to his utter relief and joy, she was there.<p>

She was standing at the edge of the tower facing the horizon. The light of the sun bathed her face in a warm glow and illuminated her smile. She just stood there, her eyes were closed and she looked so happy and content.

"Hicca," Stoick said just loud enough to get her attention. She remained still for a moment. Then she opened her eyes and looked at him. And on her face was a genuine smile that Stoick felt he hadn't seen in years. She started walking up to him, holding her smile and he dropped down on one knee to come to eye level with her.

When she stood directly in front of him she gaze up at him with her beautiful green eyes. Eyes full of pride, intelligence, and strength. "Daddy," she said softly.

Stoick immediately reached out and pulled her to him. Enclosing her small form in his massive arms. "You woke up," he whispered. "Thank the gods you woke up," he said with his voice cracking from his overwhelming joy. He smiled as he felt her wrap her arms around him.

They embraced each other for a few moments before they pulled back to look into each other's eyes. Stoick looked down at his daughter and noticed tears begin to well up in her eyes.

"I heard everything you said dad," she began. "Andâ€¦" she began as her lower lip began to quiver. "I'm so sorry for everything daddy," she said as the tears finally came forth and her body racked with sobs. "I'm sorry for the way I acted and how I ran away for all those years. I was just so angry," she choked out.

Stoick's heart clenched as he watched her cry. He placed his hand against her cheek to comfort her and made looked into her eyes. "Shhhh. It's not your fault dear. Gods know I'm the one to blame. I've been a terrible father to you. But it'll be different from now on. I promise," he said, his voice full of warmth and tenderness.

Hicca smiled and wiped away her tears. She paused to swallow a lump in her throat. "Daddy, I want to rejoin the tribe. Do you still want me?" she asked hopefully.

Stoick shook his head and chuckled. "Of course I do." Hicca looked up

at him and smiled. He pulled her back in for another hug. "I love you Hicca," he whispered to her.

"I love you too," she whispered back. And then they just held each other. Showcasing all their affection as parent and child for the world to see. Until a shout caught their attention.

"HICCA!" came the voice of Ash. Hicca and Stoic pulled away and she began making her way down the watch tower.

Just beginning to come down she stopped when she saw her friend and Ash. The stopped too and took her in. She looked fine. The others smiled at her. Relieved to see their comrade ok. Ash was about to run to her and throw his arms around her when someone beat him to it.

"OH HICCA!" Fishlegs cried as he pushed around Ash and raced toward her. He reached and pulled her into a crushing hug, lifting her off the ground in the progress. "Oh Hicca we're so glad you're ok," he said in glee.

Hicca winced slightly in pain from his powerful embrace. "Thanks Legs. I'm glad to see you too," she wheezed out. "Kind of breaking my ribs though," she added gently.

Fishlegs set her down and smiled sheepishly at her. But she gave him a warm smile as the twins came and embraced her on both sides, sandwiching her in a hug.

"Oh thanks Thor. I though I was gonna be stuck with these guys with no backup for the rest of my life," Ruffnut said jokingly. Hicca chuckled at her friend. Then they released her.

Snotlout walked up to her. "Glad to see you're ok," he said casually. He was genuinely glad to see her alright. But he was too proud to admit it and opted for playing cool.

"Thanks Snot," she said warmly.

With that she turned her attention to Ash as he made his way toward her. They smiled at each other as he drew closer. Then he stood directly in front of her. Then he punched her in the arm.

"OW!" Hicca said indignantly. She rubbed her arms and grimaced in pain. "Is that how you treat your girlfriend after she almost died," she said with a frown.

He narrowed his eyes at her. "That's for scaring me," he said sternly. "I swear, is that what you live for? To give me a heart attack?"

Hicca gaped in shock. That's what he had to say to her? "That's the first thing you want to say to me? That's not very good boyfriend protoâ€", " she was silenced as Ash stepped forward and pulled her into a kiss. Her indignation forgotten she relaxed and returned his kiss. Eyes closed, she moaned in pleasure.

After a few moment Ash pulled back. He smiled down at her as she wore a goofy grin. "That's for everything else," he said softly. Then he pulled her into a hug. "Thank you for coming back. Thank you for

waking up. Thank you for being so amazing," he whispered to her.

He felt Hicca return his hug. "Icelandic Cod," he suddenly heard her say. He pulled back and furrowed his eyebrows. "My favorite fish is Icelandic Cod. And my favorite color is green," she said with a blush and a small smile. "I heard everything you said," she explained.

Ash flushed. If she heard everythingâ€¦ then that meant she heard him say that. "So...everything everything?" he asked nervously.

"Yep. Maybe I should almost die more often. If that's what it take to make you say 'I love you'," she said jokingly.

"That's not even remotely funny," Ash said with a frown.

"Well then why don't you say it now?" she challenged.

"Maybe I will," he retorted.

"Good. I'm all ears."

"Alright hear I go," he said narrowing his eyes in determination.

"Fine," she said. Then Ash leaned down to whisper into her ear.

"Hicca-chan, ashiteru."

Hicca pulled back in surprise and blushed. Ash had a proud and mischievous smile on his face. She couldn't believe he'd said it in such a clever way. Only one thought went through her head as she gazed up at him.

You crafty bastard.

* * *

><p>New chapter<p>

32. Chapter 30

****The Dark Valkyrie****

It was a glorious sunny day on Berk. The whole village was gathered outside the great hall as they eagerly waited. The chief's daughter would be rejoining the tribe today. The strange girl who'd disappeared for so many years was finally going to officially become a part of their community. The entire village was excited and proud to have her among them. For she'd saved them, twice, and changed their whole way of life.

>With smiles on their faces they waited for her to reappear from standing before the elders and the council. She had to stand before them as they voted for readmission into the tribe. No one had any doubt that they'd vote against her.<p>

Finally the doors to the hall opened and everyone held their breaths. Then the chief walked out. He had a smile on his face that radiated pride and joy. They'd never seen them this happy before. The large

man cleared his throat to speak.

"Hello everyone. Thank you coming out on this glorious day," his voice boomed out. The crowd cheered, earning a hearty laugh from their leader. Then he raised his hands to silence them. "It's been some time, but my daughter is once again one of us. She always has been," he said warmly. "So let's all give a spectacular cheer as we welcome back Hicca Horrendous Haddock of Berk to the Hooligan tribe once more," he roared as he stepped aside to reveal a blushing but beaming girl.

They all threw their hands up and cheered. Hicca smiled back at the crowd happily. She was so glad she'd come back to Berk. She'd gained so much from her return.

Her father's love and pride. The respect and a place among her people.

Suddenly she felt something wet and warm on her cheek. Out of the corner of her eye she could see Ash leaning down to give her a gentle peck. He pulled away and smiled at her. She turned to look at him and smiled back with a blush.

Of course she'd also lost something too. Or more accurately, it had been stolen from her. Her heart. It had been taken from her by the man she'd loved since she was a child. And she couldn't be happier.

She felt a nudge from behind her and turned to give her loyal companion a scratch. She smiled at him as he purred happily. She owed it all to him. He'd changed her life so much. She was glad that'd he'd found a place by her side.

And though she'd always be different from her people. That wasn't such a bad thing. She'd use her skills and abilities to benefit and help them in her own way. She'd changed their way of life and she'd use her power to defend that new way of life.

"Hey Hicca, you know you've become quite the legend among the other tribes," Snotlout piped in as he and the other riders walked up to stand beside her.

Hicca cocked her head to the side inquisitively. "Really?"

"Yep. They even got this cool little legend about you," he said with a smile. Then all of the riders cleared their throats to speak.

"The Scarred Ones are all vanquished by the united forces, lead by Stoick the Vast, chieftain of the Hooligan tribe of Berk!"_ they began.

Then Ruffnut brought a finger to her lips. "_Shhhâ€|but what I'm going to tell you is of the one who ended it allâ€|the one who took the soul of Siver the Scarred,"_ she said in a low whisper.

"It was said on the night of her redemption, the chief's only daughter faced a beast that was born from a volcano. She fought valiantly after giving her soul to the offspring of lightning and death. Her victory saved her tribe by claiming it life with fireâ€|but at the cost of her own. Nothing was left of her or her

charge,"_ Tuffnut added.

"But many years laterâ€|she returnedâ€|changedâ€|strongerâ€|darkerâ€|" he continued.

"The beast brought her backâ€|because she found favor of the ones who gave it existence. She gained the gift of the forge from the great blacksmith himself. But her might was from a darker force," Snotlout piped in.

"Trained in her ways, the darkness is her weapon as the shadows are her allies. Her steps are gracefully silent but terrifyingly deadly. But what is far more chilling isâ€|if you don't see them coming."

"Her hunts are always followed by her dark mount, dragging her prey into the realm to finally be judged for their crime. Her only mercy is if you are killed by her in broad daylight. For when the shadows gatherâ€|she's taking you 'there'. The only thing that remains of her humanity is justice. For she will care for the weak and innocentâ€|as she once was," Fishlegs said.

"Valhalla may send Valkyries for the fallen warriorsâ€|But for the scums and oppressorsâ€|Hel sends 'her'â€|the ****Dark Valkyrie****," Ash finished with a smile.

They all looked to Hicca to see what she thought, but were surprised to see her frowning.

"Really? Am I now the Harbinger of Ragnarok?" she said in distaste.

"Besides the creepiness, at least it's an awesome legend," Snotlout said.

"Yeah. You were already a harbinger back when you kept blowing up stuâ€|," Tuffnut's interjection was cut off when Ash, on Hicca's behalf, punched him in the nose. "Oh! Hurt! I am very much hurt!" he cried as he rolled around on the ground with his hands over his face.

Hicca smiled at Ash in thanks. "You knowâ€|Valkyries are beautiful," Ash pointed out. "And if I do die in battle, will you do me the honor of accompanying me to Valhalla?"

Hicca blushed deeply at Ash and smiled wide in adoration and love. That was too sweet. He definitely deserved a kiss for that.

"Come here you," she said as she stepped towards him and threw her arms around his neck. He didn't resist as he wrapped his arms around her let her pull him down for a kiss.

The village cheered, happy for the young pair. And happy to have their heiress back. Back on Berk where her home was.

Where she had always belonged.

****That's the end people. Thank you all for reading. i hope you have all thoroughly enjoy this fanfic. I know i enjoyed writing it. Tell me what you think****

33. Impending Danger

Bonus Chapter 3 Impending Danger

Jin was in hell. He'd been having a peaceful night in his unit's base when they'd been attacked. By one person. He watched as the icy eyed kunoichi hailing from the Shadow Dragon clan massacred all his comrades. Eventually he'd been the last one left. He hadn't stood a chance. In a matter of moments she'd incapacitated him. He thought for sure she'd kill him.

He was really wishing she had.

He was suspended in the air by his arms. Both his arms and legs were bound in chain. His Shozoku was off and his torso was covered in scars and bleeding cuts from the kunoichi's interrogation. She was being very careful not to kill him. She needed answers.

"Where is he bug?" the kunoichi demanded. Jin remained silent. He glared at her in defiance. She wouldn't break him.

She sighed in annoyance. "Look, just tell me where the traitor is and I'll slit your throat and end all this," she offered. He remained silent. "If not for yourself, then for your comrades," she added. He quirked an eyebrow in question. "I won't stop wiping your bases out until I find him. So you can save a lot of your people if you just tell me where he is. You tell me, I got cut his head off, I take it back to my clan, and everyone is happy," she explained. Jin snorted indifferently.

"I'll even give you a kiss," she offered. Jin glared at her. Did she think that would honestly work? She coked her head to the side. "No?" She asked. Then without warning she punched him in his lower ribs. Jin cried out as he heard a few of them break. "Turning down a kiss from a beautiful lady is rude you know," she said chastising as she punched him again on the other side, breaking more ribs.

"I wonder how many ribs I've broken already. You lose count after a while," she paused as she pursed her lips in thought. "I wonder what I should break next. A finger maybe? An arm? Or maybe a leg? What do you think?" She asked as she looked up at him. That's when she noticed he was unconscious. He'd blacked out from the pain.

She raised a hand up and patted his cheek. He didn't stir. The kunoichi put her hands on her hips and puffed out a cheek. "Boooh. You're no fun," she said in disappointment. Then she scanned the room. She noticed a table with documents on it. Maybe she could find a clue. "You just hang out," she told the unconscious Jin.

As she walked toward the table laughter escaped her throat. "Ha. 'Hang Out'. I am hilarious," she said as a tear escaped her eye. "Hiccup would have loved that one."

When she reached the table she leaned over it and began skimming the documents. She could make out a contract for an assassination. But the target was a little unclear. Then she noticed a kunai stabbed into the table. She moved the papers and found that it was stabbed onto a map. Glancing more closely she saw that the map wasn't of

Japan.

It was a region she wasn't familiar with. She assumed it must have been quiet far. She noticed that the knife was stabbed onto an island. There were characters under it. She couldn't immediately make them out but they called to her memory.

Searching her memory she recounted the many languages her master ad taught her. Then she recognized it as runic. After a bit more searching, she found she could read the characters. And as she made them out, her face paled and her blood ran cold.

"Noâ€|he wouldn't dare,"* she whispered in dread.

The characters readâ€|_Berk._

* * *

><p>Jin was suddenly woken by water splashing onto him. He woke with start and sputtered. He was on the ground now and the kunoichi was standing over him. Her eyes were serious and murderous. They no longer held that dark playfulness as before.<p>

"Ok bug enough games. Where is he?"* She demanded. At his silence she punched him. *"Where is he?"* She demanded again. He remained silent. She growled before drawing her kunai and stabbing him in the shoulder. Jin cried out in pain but refused to talk.

"Where is he?" she screamed as she lifted him up and threw him across the room. He hit the ground hard and grunted and groaned in pain. Then she stomped on his head. The kunoichi drew her sword and pressed against his neck.

"WHERE IS DAIGO!?"* She roared in fury.

Jin remained silent before laughter started to bubble from his throat. It was maniacal, hysterical laughter, he knew he was a goner. But he may as well rub it in her face.

"You're too late. He's already gone. He's going to kill her,"* he laughed out. *"The rider of the Shadow Dragon will die. And there's nothing you can do about it."*

The kunoichi narrowed her eyes at him and glared. Then in on swift motion she sliced his head off. *"We'll see about that,"* she said in determination.

She stepped off his body and walked back to the table. She gather up all the documents before walking to the exit of the base. She'd have to report this to her Sensei first. But then, and whether she gave her permission or not, she was going to Berk. No force on heaven or earth would stop her.

And Daigo. She was going to tear him limb from limb.

She would get there. She would protect what was most precious to her. She would give anything to protect Hicca.

That's what any big sister would do.

"Hang on little sisterâ€¦I'm coming."*

* * *

><p>Oh shit! The archipelago is not ready for her. If you haven't figured it out by now, the kunoichi is Mayumi. And she's coming to Berk for the sequel. Get ready!

34. Author's Notes

Author's notes

So anyway people hello. I need your help. I intend to write a sequel to Kunoichi's Way. In this story Daigo will be the antagonist and Mayumi will come to Berk to protect Hicca.

But before I can write this sequel I need a few ideas. First of all I want an idea for the sequel's title.

Second, what will be Mayumi's secondary weapon? Like how Hicca uses the Kusarigama what will Mayumi use besides her sword. I have ideas of my own but maybe one of you will think of something better. Keep in mind that the weapons can be special and have special modifications since Hicca will have made them for her. So PM or review a suggestion for a weapon and what it can do.

Also, what is Mayumi's Moniker? I have my own idea but maybe one of you has something better.

And lastly, Mayumi will be a master of the secret techniques of her clan. So give me some ideas for some secret shadow dragon clan techniques. Nothing too crazy guys. I don't want to see the friggin rasengan on here. And no walking on water or up walls and all that crap. Don't bend the realm of possibility too much.

So tell me the technique's name. What it entails and why it's so deadly. If I like it you'll see it in the story. I'll also be accepting ideas for personality quirks Mayumi may have. And maybe ideas for bonus chapters and one shots while I'm putting this sequel together.

Hope to hear from you guys.

End
file.